

The Gospel of Abraham

By John R. Crane

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The Gospel of Abraham

*“After this, Elias appeared, and committed **the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham**, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed.” (D&C 110:12)*

After I finished the book *D&C Thoughts*, in fact the day after I finished, the Lord told me to write another book and call it *The Gospel of Abraham*. I immediately thought about the above scripture. Then the following questions came to my mind.

- What is the “gospel of Abraham”?
- Why is Abraham so important?
- What does it mean to “do the works of Abraham”?
- How is Abraham a prototype of the Father?
- What can we learn from Abraham?
- Why was Abraham called “the friend of God”?
- Who is the “most high God” El Elyon [upper highest]?

I knew the Lord wanted this book written, and that He would answer these questions for me and for anybody who reads this book. (So far, he is keeping His word.)

I want to keep the same general format as *D&C Thoughts* – go through the scriptures, verse by verse, and add any commentary or thoughts I feel inspired to make. As I said in *D&C Thoughts*, this is a great way to study the scriptures, and I recommend you doing it yourself. If you don’t agree with my comments, add your own.

For scriptures, I will use several different accounts which are parallel, but add different levels of detail. I will begin with selected chapters of the Joseph Smith translation of Genesis, followed by the Book of Abraham from the Pearl of Great Price, followed by a document which I came across called “The Writings of Abraham”, which I didn’t find in a mummy; I found on the Internet. I am including it because it adds an interesting level of detail and a probable back story. It is not canonized. With all these writings, with my commentary, and for everything you read, pray for your own understanding.

Interpreting scripture

We are getting into the canonized actual Hebrew scriptures, let's examine how we can interpret what we read. Here are some of the ways the Jewish rabbi's read scripture.

From: <http://www.yashanet.com/studies/revstudy/pardes.htm>

The Rules of Pardes

Introduction

*The modern manner of interpreting Biblical text is commonly called **exegesis**. This method concerns itself mostly with the literary and grammatical context of Scripture verses. Practitioners of exegesis sometimes view anything beyond the literal text as "isogesis" and often pay it little heed to it, or regard it with suspicion. This is an unfortunate error, a result of a backlash against improper allegorizing of the Scriptures, resulting in a case where "the baby is thrown out with the bathwater."*

With regard to the proper understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures in their proper context, including the "New Testament" books, there are in fact "levels" of interpretation that must be taken into consideration. This was the method used to write and interpret Scripture by the authors themselves as well as the audience of their time and culture.

THE RULES OF PARDES INTERPRETATION

The four level of interpretation are called: *Parshat, Remez, D'rash & Sud*. The first letter of each word P-R-D-S is taken, and vowels are added for pronunciation, giving the word PARDES (meaning "garden" or "orchard"). Each layer is deeper and more intense than the last, like the layers of an onion.

P'shat (pronounced peh-shaht' - meaning "simple")

The p'shat is the plain, simple meaning of the text. The understanding of scripture in its natural, normal sense using the customary meanings of the word's being used, literary style, historical and cultural setting, and context. The p'shat is the keystone of Scripture understanding. If we discard the p'shat we lose any real chance of an accurate understanding and we are no longer objectively deriving meaning from the Scriptures (exegesis), but subjectively reading meaning into the scriptures (eisogesis). The Talmud states that no passage loses its p'shat:

Talmud Shabbat 63a - Rabbi Kahana objected to Mar son of Rabbi Huna: But this refers to the words of the Torah? *A verse cannot depart from its plain meaning, he replied.*

Note that within the p'shat you can find several types of language, including figurative, symbolic and allegorical. The following generic guidelines can be used to determine if a passage is figurative and therefore figurative even in its p'shat:

1. When an inanimate object is used to describe a living being, the statement is figurative.
Example: Isaiah 5:7 - *For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.*

2. When life and action are attributed to an inanimate object the statement is figurative. Example: Zechariah 5:1-3 - *Then I turned, and lifted up my eyes, and looked, and behold a flying scroll. And he said to me, What do you see? And I answered, I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits. And he said to me, This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth; for everyone who steals shall be cut off henceforth, according to it; and everyone who swears falsely shall be cut off henceforth, according to it.*
3. When an expression is out of character with the thing described, the statement is figurative. Example: Psalm 17:8 - *Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of your wings*
...

Remez (pronounced reh-mez' - meaning "hint")

This is where another (implied) meaning is alluded to in the text, usually revealing a deeper meaning. There may still be a p'shat meaning as well as another meaning as any verse can have multiple levels of meaning. An example of implied "REMEZ" Proverbs 20:10 - *Different weights, and different measures, both of them are alike an abomination to the Lord.* The p'shat would be concerned with a merchant using the same scale to weigh goods for all of his customers. The remez implies that this goes beyond this into aspects of fairness and honesty in anyone's life.

D'rash (pronounced deh-rahsh' also called "Midrash," meaning "concept")

This is a teaching or exposition or application of the P'shat and/or Remez. (In some cases this could be considered comparable to a "sermon.") For instance, Biblical writers may take two or more unrelated verses and combine them to create a verse(s) with a third meaning.

There are three rules to consider when utilizing the d'rash interpretation of a text:

1. A d'rash understanding cannot be used to strip a passage of its p'shat meaning, nor may any such understanding contradict the p'shat meaning of any other scripture passage. As the Talmud states, *"No passage loses its p'shat."*
2. Let scripture interpret scripture. Look for the scriptures themselves to define the components of an allegory.
3. The primary components of an allegory represent specific realities. We should limit ourselves to these primary components when understanding the text.

Sud (pronounced either sawd, or sood [like "wood"] - meaning "hidden")

This understanding is the hidden, secret or mystic meaning of a text. An example most people are familiar with is Revelation 13:18, regarding the "beast" and the number "666."

EXAMPLES OF PARDES FROM MATTHEW

Examples of the Remez, D'rash and Sud, can be found in Matthew as follows. (Of course the p'shat is throughout the text.) Without knowledge and application of the rules of PARDES, these verses would either not make sense or indicate an error on the part of the author:

Remez

Matthew 2:15 - *"Out of Egypt I called my son."* This is a quote from Hosea 11:1 that Matthew is applying to Yeshua. If we stuck to a literal exegesis only and researched the quote, we would have to accuse Matthew of improperly using Scripture, as Hosea is clearly speaking of the nation of Israel, and not the Messiah. Matthew however, is hinting (*a remez*) at the relationship between Israel and the Messiah, in this and other verses he uses.

D'rash

Matthew 18:18 - *"... Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven"* This is a verse that has been interpreted in numerous (incorrect) ways due to a lack of understanding that this a *d'rash* concerning decisions one makes in their personal "walk with God" (called your "*halakha*" in Hebrew/Judaism).

Sud

Matthew 26:28 - *"Then He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them saying, Drink from it all of you, This is my blood ..."* Taken literally this verse alone would not only be a violation of the Torah commandment against consuming blood, but along with other verses about eating Yeshua's flesh (John 6:51-56), could be grounds for accusations of cannibalism. There is a far deeper, more mystical meaning here however (*the sud*), even one that those who heard Him did not understand (John 6:52).

Other Interpretations

It occurred to me that there might be other ways to look at the scriptures covering the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. do the cattle and sheep represent the nations, and the people represent the gods? Is this a history or prophesy?

Genesis

This is the Biblical Old Testament account of the life of Abraham, based on the Joseph Smith translation of a portion of the Book of Genesis.

CHAPTER 11

Babel built -- Language confounded -- Generations of Shem -- Abram born; married, and goes into Canaan. This chapter gets us located in the proper time and place and introduces us to some of the major characters.

Gen 11:1 And the whole earth **[after the flood]** was of the same language, and of the same speech. And it came to pass, that many journeyed from the east, and as they journeyed from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and dwelt there in the plain of Shinar. **[southern region of Mesopotamia]**

Gen 11:2 And they said one to another, Come, go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and they had slime for mortar.

Gen 11:3 And they said, Come, go to, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top will be high, nigh unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

[In imitation of the City of Enoch, the people desired to gather and build their own city, but not by the Lord, but by the works of men. This was to be the anti-Zion (substitute Zion). They wanted to build a tower so that they could reach heaven by their own works, and not by the Spirit of God. How often do we see people today trying to ascend to heaven by building a tower out of books, or through an organizations of men, or out of their own works? Another reason why they started to build the tower was as a protection from a possible future flood. They didn't trust the promises of God that he would not send another flood to destroy the earth]

Gen 11:4 And the Lord came down **[To see with his own eyes, unbeknownst to the people]**, beholding the city and the tower which the children of men were building;

Gen 11:5 And the Lord said **[Who was He talking to?]**, Behold, the people are the same **[They had unity.]**, and they all have the same language **[But they lacked diversity]**; and this tower they begin to build, and now, nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined, except I, the Lord, confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So I, the Lord, will scatter them abroad from thence, upon all the face of the land, and unto every quarter of the earth.

[I don't believe the Lord wants to stop mankind from building, achieving, and progressing, but this was going about it in the wrong way, and they needed a gentle nudge in the direction He intends. This telestial world is a mixture of all types of people in various stages of progression, and rather than impose a single culture on all people, diverse groups of people need to develop the right culture where each person can best thrive and develop. There is the proper time to scatter, and the proper way to gather. This particular time was the time to scatter, spread out and fill the whole earth so that the planet could fulfill the measure of its creation. In the latter-days, we will again be "nudged" by the Lord to gather, but at that time, the gathering will be into two distinct groups. There will be an entire separation of the righteous from the wicked. The wicked will be sent to a place where they can best continue their telestial lives, if this is their desire, while the righteous will be gathered into Zion, and

will be rejoined by the now “lost” City of Enoch. We won’t need a tower to reach heaven, because heaven will be here.]

Gen 11:6 And they were confounded, and left off to build the city, and they hearkened not unto the Lord, therefore, is the name of it called Babel **[confusion, by mixing]**, because the Lord was displeased with their works, and did there confound the language of all the earth; and **from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face thereof.**

[Language is fundamental to a culture. If you want to get to know a people, study their language. Language has a lot to do with how people think about things and how they view the world. The Lord wanted diversity, and was able to achieve it easily by changing their language. But, there must have been a purpose behind this, because if you study a lot of different languages, even if you know just a smattering of a language, you discover similarities and families of languages. They are not random. Another benefit of the diverse languages and cultures is so that we will be forced to SEEK understanding of one another.

Speaking of language, I am going to include the Hebrew meanings of the names mentioned in these verses in Genesis. Hebrew names describe the nature of a person, and hopefully help us relate to them better. Let’s start off with Noah. The name means “rest” or “comfort”. “And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.” Gen. 5:29 The earth also received comfort, during the flood, and to enjoy a brief rest from all the wickedness taking place on her surface. Did you ever think that our wickedness grieves earth, our mother?

Another reason for giving the meaning of the name: these genealogies are pretty boring. We need to add some interest.]

Gen 11:7 And these were the generations of Shem **[Shem was the chosen son of Noah. The name “Shem” literally means Name.]**. And Shem being an hundred years old, begat Arphaxad **[“I shall fail as the breast: he cursed the breast-bottle”]** two years after the flood; and Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:8 And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah **[“Sprout”]**; and Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah, four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11: 9 And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber **[“The region beyond”. This was the origin of the name Hebrew. Other related named are Heber, Ivri, Iberia.]**; and Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:10 And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg **[Means “division” because in his days the earth was divided into continents. Eventually, all the land masses of the earth will be reunited.]**; and Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:11 And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu **[“friend”]**; and Peleg lived after he begat Reu, two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:12 And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug **[“branch”]**; and Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:13 And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor; and Serug lived after he begat Nahor [**“snorting” (You can’t make this stuff up.)**] two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:14 And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah [**“station” Abraham’s father**]; and Nahor lived after he begat Terah and hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters.

Gen 11:15 And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram [**“exalted father”**], Nahor and Haran [**“mountaineer”**].

Gen 11:16 Now these were the generations of Terah; Terah begat Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran begat Lot [**“covering”, Abraham’s nephew**].

Gen 11:17 And Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity, in Ur [**“flame” or “light”, city in southern Babylonia, city of the Chaldeans, center of moon worship, home of Abraham's father, Terah, and departure point for the Abraham's migration to Mesopotamia and Canaan**] of the Chaldees [**a territory in lower Mesopotamia bordering on the Persian Gulf**].

Gen 11:18 And Abram and Nahor took them wives; and the name of Abram's wife was Sarai [**“princess”**]; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah [**“queen”**], the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah; but Sarai [**So, we have a queen and a princess.**] was barren, and she bear no child [**a terrible reproach in Jewish and Mormon society**].

Gen 11:19 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan [**“lowland”, the land west of the Jordan peopled by the descendants of Canaan and subsequently conquered by the Israelites under Joshua**]; and they came unto Haran [**name of the place to which Abraham migrated from Ur of the Chaldees and where the descendants of his brother Nahor established themselves; probably located in Mesopotamia, in Padanaram, the cultivated district at the foot of the hills between the Khabour and the Euphrates below Mount Masius**], and dwelt there.

Gen 11:20 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

CHAPTER 12

God's command to Abram -- He by faith obeys -- Covenant with Abram -- Pharaoh plagued for Sarai's sake.

Gen 12:1 Now, the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee;

[There is a huge back story that we are missing from the Old Testament. What happened between Abraham and his father? Why did Abraham have to leave Haran? Why was Abraham so highly favored of the Lord?]

Gen 12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee shall the families of the earth be blessed.

Gen 12:3 So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

Gen 12:4 And Abram took Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

[These blessings were not arbitrary, and God didn't just randomly pick Abraham and speak to him out of the blue. Abraham made covenants with the Lord. He faithfully sought after a knowledge of his Fathers and to gain knowledge and Priesthood. He received constant revelation from this Lord. This is really remarkable, especially when you consider that everyone about him was in an apostate condition and worshipped idols, as we shall see.]

Gen 12:5 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, and the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land.

Gen 12:6 And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land. And there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.

[God would eventually give the land of the Canaanites to Abraham and his seed, of which he had none at the time.]

Gen 12:7 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, leaving Beth-el on the west, and Hai was on the east. And there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

Gen 12:8 And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine became grievous in the land.

[Abraham lived the law of sacrifice, and made an offering to the Lord as soon as he arrived in Canaan. But he and his family were driven to Egypt on account of the famine in Canaan.]

Gen 12:9 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold, now I know thee to be a fair woman to look upon; therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife; and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive; say I pray thee unto them, I am his sister; that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

[Sarai was Abraham's wife as well as his half-sister. The pharaoh desired Sarah because of her beauty. If Abraham told Pharaoh that she was his wife, Pharaoh would have to kill Abraham in order to take Sarai. But, if Sarai were only Abraham's sister, the Pharaoh would spare Abraham's life and shower him with gifts in order to "purchase" Sarai. Customs in those days aren't what they are now. Not everything we read in the Bible is an example for us today.]

Gen 12:10 And it came to pass, that when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman, that she was very fair.

Gen 12:11 The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commanded her to be brought before Pharaoh; and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

Gen 12:12 And he entreated Abram well for her sake; and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

[The Lord had actually told Abraham to say this about his wife, and plans worked out exactly as the Lord promised.]

Gen 12:13 And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

[God got Pharaoh's attention by sending a plague, so he would sense something was wrong. There are many parallels to the life of Abram and Sarai that parallel other stories in the Old Testament.]

Gen 12:14 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What hast thou done unto me in this thing? Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her unto me to wife; now therefore, behold I say unto thee, Take thy wife and go thy way.

Gen 12:15 And Pharaoh commanded men concerning him; and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

[Pharaoh restored Sarai to Abram and sent him away with more wealth, in addition that that which he already had.]

CHAPTER 13

Abram journeys out of Egypt -- Separation of Abram and Lot, with their substance -- Abram dwells in Mamre, Lot in the plain toward Sodom.

Gen 13:1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, unto the south. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

Gen 13:2 And he went on his journey from the south, even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first; and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.

Gen 13:3 And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

Gen 13:4 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together; for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle, and the herdmen of Lot's cattle, that they could not dwell together.

[Abraham and Lot both had great flocks, herds, and possessions, and a number of people working for them. This caused a conflict among the herdsmen.]

Gen 13:5 And the Canaanite, and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

[Apparently the neighboring people didn't appreciate the sudden influx in population, either.]

Gen 13:6 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we are brethren.

Gen 13:7 Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou go to the left hand, then I will go to the right; if thou go to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

[Abraham shows his magnanimity by proposing the two families split up, and it would seem that Abraham being the senior family member would get first pick, but he lets Lot choose instead.]

Abraham was a very generous man, and throughout his life constantly favored others as his own expense. No wonder the Lord blessed him.]

Gen 13:8 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, like as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt.

Gen 13:9 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east; and they separated themselves the one from the other.

Gen 13:10 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

[Lot had first pick, and he picked what he thought was the best land: the fertile plain. Abraham let him have it with no objection. So, Abraham remained in Canaan while Lot dwelt near the city of Sodom.

To give you some idea of what area Canaan took in: “And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom (“burning”), and Gomorrah (“submersion”, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.” Gen. 10:9]

Gen 13:11 But the men of Sodom becoming sinners, and exceedingly wicked before the Lord, the Lord was angry with them.

[Most people associate Sodom with sexual sin, but the inhabitants were guilty of other things as well. In addition to these verses, you can read more about the sins of Sodom in “The Writings of Abraham”

Ezek 16:48 [As] I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.

*Ezek 16:49 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.***

*Ezek 16:50 **And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw [good].***

Matt 10:11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

Matt 10:12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

Matt 10:13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

*Matt 10:14 **And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.***

*Matt 10:15 Verily I say unto you, **It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.***

The sins of Sodom were abominations, and also, they did not welcome strangers into the city, and did not help the poor and the needy. When Jesus sent his disciples out to teach the people, he told them that if the people do not receive you, bear testimony against them, and he compared their punishment to that of Sodom and Gomorrah or Gomorrah.]

Gen 13:12 And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward;

Gen 13:13 And remember the covenant which I make with thee; for it shall be an everlasting covenant; and thou shalt remember the days of Enoch thy father;

Gen 13:14 For all the land which thou seest, will I give thee, and to thy seed for ever; and I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, thy seed shall also be numbered.

Gen 13:15 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee. Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which was in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord.

[It pays to be generous. God was going to give all the land to Abraham and his seed, anyway.]

CHAPTER 14

Melchizedek blesses Abram, and gives him bread and wine -- Lot taken captive, is rescued by Abram -- The priesthood -- Abram pays tithes to Melchizedek, keeper of the Lord's storehouse.

Gen 14:1 And it came to pass, in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar, and Chedorlaomer king of Elam **[a country in Persia, along the Persian Gulf]**, and Tidal king of nations; **[3 city states under Chedorlaomer]**

Gen 14:2 That these kings made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. **[5 Canaanite city states]**

Gen 14:3 All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea **[southern end of the Dead Sea];**

Gen 14:4 Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

Gen 14:5 And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which was by the wilderness.

Gen 14:6 And they returned and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, in Hazezontamar. **[The purpose of Chedorlaomer's campaigns was to show Elam's might to all territories under Elamite authority. His armies and allies plundered tribes and cities, for their provisions, who were enroute to the revolting cities of the Jordan plain.]**

Gen 14:7 And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar; **[one of the 5 cities of the plain]**

Gen 14:8 And they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; with Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five.

[Having explained the 4 kings and the 5 kings, and the reasons for the revolt, we are back to the battle near the south end of the Dead Sea]

Gen 14:9 And the vale of Siddim was filled with slime pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain which was called Hanabal.

[There is a great rift valley where two plates of the earth's crust come together. It extends from Lebanon to Mozambique. Along this rift, which is very earthquake prone, lies the Sea of Galilee, Jericho (where the "walls came tumblin' down", the Jordan River, Dead Sea, Gulf of Aqaba, Red Sea, and various lakes and valleys down through Africa. At the southern end of the Dead Sea, there are tar and asphalt pits – probably substance oozing up through the earth's core. The armies of Sodom and Gomorrah got trapped by the Mesopotamian forces in the tar pits. Those who escaped fled to the mountains.]

Gen 14:10 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.

Gen 14:11 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods and departed.

[The conquering armies captured the provisions of Sodom and Gomorrah, and took Lot, Abraham's nephew captive.]

Gen 14:12 And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew, the man of God, for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eschol, and brother of Aner; and these were confederate with Abram.

Gen 14:13 And when Abram heard that Lot, his brother's son, was taken captive, he armed his trained men, and they which were born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued unto Dan.

Gen 14:14 And he divided himself against them, he and his men, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which was on the left hand of Damascus.

Gen 14:15 And he brought back Lot, his brother's son, and all his goods, and the women also, and the people.

[News came to Abraham of the capture, so he sent his army of men, together with the armies of the men who were in league with him, and retrieved Lot, his family, and all their goods. So, even though Abraham and Lot were separated, Abraham was still looking out for Lot and his family.]

Gen 14:16 And the king of Sodom also went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which was the king's dale.

Gen 14:17 And Melchizedek, king of Salem [**"peace", possible early name for Jerusalem "teaching of peace"**], brought forth bread and wine; and he break bread and blest it; and he blest the wine, he being the priest of the most high God [**"El Elyon". This the first time the phrase most high God is introduced in the Old Testament, and is used through the story of Abraham. "El" means God, and "Elyon" means "the highest". There are some who believe Melchizedek was an incarnation of Christ, and that the**

“most high God” is the father of Adam-Michael, who is our father on earth and in heaven. Pray and ask the Lord for your own revelation.],

[The valley of Shaveh is near Jerusalem, not near to Sodom and Gomorrah or 18 miles away from where Abraham lived, so this much have been an especially arranged event. We don’t know specifically why Abraham came there, but based on the context provided by Joseph Smith, we can make some very good guesses.]

Gen 14:18 And he gave to Abram, and he blessed him, and said, **Blessed Abram, thou art a man of the most high God, possessor of heaven and of earth; [Quite the blessing. What did Abraham do to merit this?]**

Gen 14:19 And blessed is the name of the most high God **[the “highest God”]**, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand.

[This was more than just a Sunday afternoon sacrament service. There are higher ordinances which begin with the Sacrament and end with a blessing for Abraham and praise for the most high God.]

Gen 14:20 And Abram gave him **[Melchizedek]** tithes of all he had taken.

Gen 14:21 And the king of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

Gen 14:22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up my hand unto the Lord **[made a sacred covenant with God]**, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth.

Gen 14:23 And have sworn that I will not take of thee from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, (lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich;)

Gen 14:24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Ener, Eschol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

[Interesting that Abraham would pay tithes of all that he had taken, and then give the rest back to the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, and those who fought with him, keeping nothing for himself.]

Gen 14:25 And Melchizedek lifted up his voice and blessed Abram **[for his righteousness and generosity]**.

Gen 14:26 Now Melchizedek was a man of **faith**, who wrought **righteousness**; and when a child **[Look what he accomplished as a child, without Priesthood, acting on faith, alone!]** he feared God, and stopped the mouths of lions, and quenched the violence of fire.

Gen 14:27 And thus, **having been approved of God**, he was ordained an high priest after the order of the covenant which God made with Enoch,

Gen 14:28 It being after the order of the Son of God; which order came, not by man, nor the will of man; neither by father nor mother; neither by beginning of days nor end of years; but of God; **[Talking about this order or Priesthood, not Melchizedek’s parentage or ancestry.]**

Gen 14:29 **And it was delivered unto men by the calling of his own voice, according to his own will, unto as many as believed on his name.**

[This is how you obtain the Melchizedek Priesthood. You receive it by the calling of God's own voice, and you receive it by an oath and covenant, unlike the Aaronic Priesthood, which is received by ordination.]

Gen 14:30 **For God having sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by himself [for He could swear by none greater];** that every one being ordained after this order and calling should have power, by faith, to break mountains, to divide the seas, to dry up waters, to turn them out of their course;

Gen 14:31 To put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, to break every band, to stand in the presence of God; to do all things according to his will, according to his command, subdue principalities and powers; and this by the will of the Son of God which was from before the foundation of the world.

Gen 14:32 And men having this faith, coming up unto this order of God, were translated and taken up into heaven.

[See also the section in this book called "Father of the Faithful".]

Gen 14:33 And now, Melchizedek was a priest of this order; therefore he obtained peace in Salem, and was called the Prince of peace.

Gen 14:34 And his people wrought righteousness, and obtained heaven, and sought for the city of Enoch which God had before taken, separating it from the earth, having reserved it unto the latter days, or the end of the world;

Gen 14:35 And hath said, and sworn with an oath, that the heavens and the earth should come together; and the sons of God should be tried so as by fire.

Gen 14:36 And this Melchizedek, having thus established righteousness, was called the king of heaven by his people, or, in other words, the King of peace.

Gen 14:37 And he lifted up his voice, and he blessed Abram, being the high priest, and the keeper of the storehouse of God;

Gen 14:38 Him whom God had appointed to receive tithes for the poor **[The purpose of tithing is to support the poor, not to enrich the coffers of a corporation.]**

Gen 14:39 Wherefore, Abram paid unto him tithes of all that he had **[Abraham recognized Melchizedek as his Priesthood leader and bishop.]**, of all the riches which he possessed, which God had given him more than that which he had need **[This is the law of tithing]**.

Gen 14:40 And it came to pass, that God blessed Abram, and gave unto him riches, and honor, and lands for an everlasting possession; according to the covenant which he had made, and according to the blessing wherewith Melchizedek had blessed him.

[In course of time, the city of Salem was taken up to heaven, to join the City of Enoch. Abraham was on the same boat with Noah, figuratively speaking. He was righteous enough to ascend, but chosen to remain behind to bless and comfort the earth, and to be the father of a righteous posterity, which would again, one day create another Zion and another City of Peace, which would one day welcome the return of the cities of Enoch and Melchizedek. In a way, you could compare the missions of both

these men to the missions of Joseph of Egypt and John the Beloved, both of whom were “separated from their brethren” to prepare a place for their return.]

CHAPTER 15

God covenants with Abram -- Abram's vision -- The captivity foretold.

Gen 15:1 And it came to pass, that after these things, the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying;

Gen 15:2 Fear not, Abram; I will be thy shield; I will be thy exceeding great reward **[A Mystery]**. And according to the blessings of my servant, I will give unto thee.

[God came to Abraham in a vision and confirmed upon him the blessing given by Melchizedek. It is always good to confirm these things with the Lord, who will always uphold the word of His servants, as if from His own mouth.]

Gen 15:3 And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and Eliezer of Damascus was made the steward of my house?

Gen 15:4 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed; and lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

Gen 15:5 And behold, the word of the Lord came unto him again, saying,

Gen 15:6 This shalt not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

[The promises to Abraham are of little use unless Abraham produces an heir, but he is childless, and he promises that the trusted steward of his house, but the Lord tells him the heir will come from his own body. Note how the Lord and Abraham have a back-and-forth. You will see this many times between Abraham and the Lord as they reason with each other. No wonder God calls Abraham his “friend”. (Isa. 41:8) The word used is “ahab”. Gileadi translates this “my beloved friend”.]

Gen 15:7 And he brought him forth abroad, and he said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them.

Gen 15:8 And he said unto him, so shall thy seed be.

[God shows Abraham how innumerable his seed will be.]

Gen 15:9 And Abram said, Lord God, how wilt thou give me this land for an everlasting inheritance?

[Abraham is not afraid to ask ‘how’?]

Gen 15:10 And the Lord said, Though thou wast dead, yet am I not able to give it thee?

Gen 15:11 And if thou shalt die, yet thou shalt possess it, for the day cometh, that the Son of Man shall live; but how can he live if he be not dead? he must first be quickened.

Gen 15:12 And it came to pass that Abram looked forth and saw the days of the Son of Man, and was glad, and his soul found rest, and he believed in the Lord; and the Lord counted it unto him for righteousness.

[This passage seems strange at first, But it satisfied Abraham and his soul found rest, knowing that he would have seed and from that seed would come the Son of Man (Christ). Sometimes the Lord doesn't answer your question directly, but answers another question which comes true, only if the answer to the first question is 'yes'. Abraham believed what the Lord showed him. He was faithful to his covenants and faithful to the covenants of the Lord, and the Lord counted it unto him for righteousness. We often hear that Abraham exercised faith in the case of Isaac, but it was much more than that. Abraham demonstrated constant faithfulness throughout his entire life.]

Gen 15:13 And the Lord said unto him, I, the Lord, brought thee out of Ur, of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

Gen 15:14 And Abram said, Lord, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? yet he believed God. And the Lord said unto him, Take me a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.

[The Lord again promised Abraham the surrounding land of Canaan as an inheritance, and Abraham again asked how it would come about. Rather than condemn Abraham for asking, the Lord, basically said 'Trust me.', And proceeded to make a covenant with him by sacrifice.]

Gen 15:15 And he took unto him all these, and he divided them in the midst, and he laid each piece one against the other; but the birds divided he not.

[This was common practice back then. As the expression went, you don't make a covenant, you cut a covenant.]

Gen 15:16 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a great horror of darkness fell upon him.

Gen 15:17 And the Lord spake, and he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land which shall not be theirs, and shall serve strangers; and they shall be afflicted, and serve them four hundred years; and also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterwards shall they come out with great substance.

Gen 15:18 And thou shalt die, and go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

Gen 15:19 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

Gen 15:20 And it came to pass, that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, **a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp [a burning, glorious personage in the midst of a pillar of fire: the Presence of the Lord in the fulness of His glory]** which passed between those pieces which Abram had divided.

Gen 15:21 And in that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates;

Gen 15:22 The Kenites, and the Kenazites, and the Kadmonites, and Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

[The Lord makes a covenant with Abraham and prophesies concerning his seed.]

CHAPTER 16

Sarai's gift to Abram -- God does not acknowledge Hagar as Abram's wife Ishmael born -- Sarai is promised a child.

Gen 16:1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bare him no children. And she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar [**"flight", which is what she did**].

Gen 16:2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold, now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing; I pray thee go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened unto the voice of Sarai.

Gen 16:3 And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband, Abram, to be his wife.

[Sarah offered Hagar, her maid, to Abraham to be a mother for Abraham's heir. This was a generous selfless offer. Note that in this case Abraham did not take Hagar, Sarah offered her to him.]

Gen 16:4 And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

Gen 16:5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong is upon thee; I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes; the Lord judge between me and thee.

Gen 16:6 But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hands; do to her as it pleaseth thee.

Gen 16:7 And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

[Hagar conceived and threw it back in Sarah's face. Sarah complained to Abraham, who told Sarah she could do whatever she wanted. Sarah drove Hagar out. If Hagar stayed away, this would mean that Abraham would not get his heir. Did he realize the this was a possibility when he told Sarah she could do what she wanted to Hagar?]

Gen 16:8 And an angel of the Lord [**possibly the Lord, himself**] found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur [**on the Arabian Peninsula, close to Egypt. Hagar wanted to return to her people in Egypt**].

Gen 16:9 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou, and whither wilt thou go? and she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

Gen 16:10 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself unto her hands.

Gen 16:11 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, The Lord will multiply thy seed exceedingly, so that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

[Return to your mistress. Submit to your mistress. And, the Lord will make of you a great nation, in no small respect due to the influence of Abraham.]

Gen 16:12 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael [**God will hear. Hagar was highly favored of the Lord, too.**]: because the Lord hath heard thy afflictions.

Gen 16:13 And he will be a wild man; and his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

Gen 16:14 And she called the name of the angel of the Lord.

Gen 16:15 And he spake unto her, saying, Knowest thou that God seest thee?

Gen 16:16 And she said, I know that God seest **[el ro'iy, the God who sees]** me, for I have also here looked after him.

Gen 16:17 And there was a well between Kadesh and Bered, near where Hagar saw the angel.

Gen 16:18 And the name of the angel was Beer-la-hai-roi; wherefore the well was called Beer-la-hai-roi **[well of the living one seeing me]** for a memorial.

[There is a beautiful song on YouTube about Hagar. It's called "The God that Sees".]

Gen 16:19 And Hagar bear Abram a son; and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bear, Ishmael.

Gen 16:20 And Abram was four-score and six **[86]** years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

[Abraham raised Ishmael as his own son, which he was, but the Lord had other plans.]

CHAPTER 17

Abram's new name -- Circumcision instituted.

Gen 17:1 And when Abram was ninety and nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I, the Almighty God, give unto thee a commandment; that thou shalt walk uprightly before me, and be perfect **["tamayn", not perfection in the moral sense, but whole, sound, complete, finished, at an end. The Greek word in the New Testament is "telios". It is translated as "perfect", but telios has the exact same meaning as tamayn. How many people have been made to suffer because they could not achieve moral perfection? But this not what the Lord is asking for.]**

Gen 17:2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly.

Gen 17:3 And it came to pass, that Abram fell on his face, and called upon the name of the Lord.

Gen 17:4 And God talked with him, saying, My people have gone astray from my precepts, and have not kept mine ordinances, which I gave unto their fathers;

Gen 17:5 And they have not observed mine anointing, and the burial, or baptism wherewith I commanded them;

Gen 17:6 But have turned from the commandment, and taken unto themselves the washing of children, and the blood of sprinkling;

Gen 17:7 And have said that the blood of the righteous Abel was shed for sins; and have not known wherein they are accountable before me.

Gen 17:8 But as for thee, behold, I will make my covenant with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

[The world had gone into apostasy, polluted the ordinances of God and taught false doctrines concerning the atonement. The Lord deigned to renew his covenant with the righteous Abraham because the Lord knew he could trust Abraham. Abraham called upon the Name of the God, and the Lord taught him and renewed the covenants of the Fathers.]

Gen 17:9 And this covenant I make, that thy children may be known among all nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram [**“exalted father”**], but thy name shall be called Abraham [**“father of a multitude”**]; for, a father of many nations have I made thee.

Gen 17:10 And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come of thee, and of thy seed.

Gen 17:11 And I will establish a covenant of circumcision with thee, and it shall be my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations; that thou mayest know forever that children are not accountable before me until they are eight years old.

Gen 17:12 And thou shalt observe to keep all my covenants wherein I covenanted with thy fathers; and thou shalt keep the commandments which I have given thee with mine own mouth, and I will be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee.

[Here is an explanation of the meaning of the covenant of circumcision, which was meant to identify those of the pure or partial blood of Israel. Pray and ask the Lord for your own confirmation.]

There were other races on earth at the time of Adam, but because of covenants made in the pre-earth life, those who covenanted to come to God in this life were designated "Israel" (meaning "to come to God", or "to come directly to God") were to come through the lineage of Adam.

This pure line of Israel ended with the Jaredites and the City of Salem. Not all of Noah's grandchildren had pure descendants. Only the seed of Shem. Most of them were translated in the City of Salem with Melchizedek. Abraham was not of pure blood, but was the next to covenant with God and provide a people who would bear the covenant. Abraham was the first to be given the covenant of circumcision. This covenant was to be a sign between him and God to separate his seed from the Gentiles.

Today the house of Israel comes by descent as well as by covenant, and is among all nations mixed with the blood of the Gentiles. When we receive the baptism of fire, baptism of the Holy Ghost, we become adopted children of Israel and our DNA literally changes. The Gospel is available to all people regardless of lineage, but those of Israel display an especial affinity for it and are attracted to it.]

Gen 17:13 And I will give unto thee and thy seed after thee, a land wherein thou art a stranger; all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

Gen 17:14 And God said unto Abraham, Therefore thou shalt keep my covenant, thou and thy seed after thee, in their generations.

Gen 17:15 And this shall be my covenant which ye shall keep between me and thee and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised.

Gen 17:16 And **ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.**

Gen 17:17 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations;

Gen 17:18 He that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.

Gen 17:19 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised, and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

Gen 17:20 And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people, he hath broken my covenant.

[This was to be an everlasting covenant from generation to generation, not just to the seed of Abraham, but all the males of his household. Circumcision was a huge issue when Gentiles joined the early Christian church. The apostles finally determined that circumcision was not required of the Gentiles.]

Gen 17:21 And God said unto Abraham, as for Sarai **[princess]** thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah **[noblewoman]** thou shalt call her name.

[In both the case of Abram and Sarai, the addition of the “h”, (Hebrew letter ‘heh’) meant a new name and an elevation in status. The letter also represents “spirit”, “breath”, “expression”, or “revelation”.]

Gen 17:22 And I will bless her, and I will give thee a son of her; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be blessed, The mother of nations; kings and people shall be of her.

[Sarah was to be the mother of nations, just as Abraham was to be the father of nations. We should not neglect the important role of women.]

Gen 17:23 Then Abraham fell on his face and rejoiced, and said in his heart, There shall a child be born unto him that is an **hundred years old**, and Sarah that is **ninety years old** shall bear.

Gen 17:24 And Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael **[In his excitement, Abraham did not forget Ishmael.]** might live uprightly before thee!

Gen 17:25 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bare thee a son, and thou shalt call his name Isaac **[“he laughs”]**; and I will establish my covenant with him also **[Isaac will inherit the covenant.]**, for an everlasting covenant with his seed after him.

Gen 17:26 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly;

Gen 17:27 Twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

Gen 17:28 **But my covenant will I establish with Isaac**, whom **Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.**

Gen 17:29 And he left off talking with him; and God went up **[ascended]** from Abraham.

Gen 17:30 And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money **[slaves]**, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him.

Gen 17:31 And Abraham was ninety and nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

Gen 17:32 And Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

Gen 17:33 In the selfsame day Abraham was circumcised, and Ishmael his son; and all the men of his house, which were born in his house, and bought with money of strangers, were also circumcised with him.

[All the males in Abraham's household were circumcised.]

CHAPTER 18

The Lord appears to Abraham -- Lot being warned of God, flees.

Gen 18:1 And the Lord appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre. And he sat in his tent door in the heat of the day;

Gen 18:2 And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men **[Melchizedek and two other men from Salem]** stood by him; and when he saw, he ran to meet them from his tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said;

Gen 18:3 My brethren, if now I have found favor in your sight, pass not away I pray you from thy servant.

Gen 18:4 Let a little water I pray you be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that you shall pass on; for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

Gen 18:5 And Abraham **hastened** into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead, and make cakes upon the hearth.

Gen 18:6 And Abraham **ran** unto the herd, and fetched a calf, tender and good, and gave it unto a young man, and he hasted to dress it.

Gen 18:7 And he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set them before them, and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

[Abraham, with his usual hospitality toward strangers, prepared a feast for them, with Sarah in the kitchen, and he as the butcher. In all likelihood, they had servants preparing the meal. But, notice how Abraham "ran" and "hastened". Not bad for a 99-year old man.]

Gen 18:8 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.

[The story of Abraham is the story of everyday life mixed with appearances of god, angels, and visions. Their customs seem foreign to us today, such as Sarah being told to prepare the meal, but not being invited to share it, when after all she was the main purpose for the visit.]

Gen 18:9 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, Sarah thy wife shall have a son.

Gen 18:10 And Sarah heard him, in the tent door. **[She listened in, but was never allowed to join the conversation, even though it was about her.]**

[I will be honest. This grates against my sensibilities. It seems odd that Abraham could be so kind and generous to other men, but treat his wife this way. But these were the customs back then, and in some circles, men still act like this and treat their wives like this, and women call it “patriarchy”, and seek to destroy it. When I read about the lives of these men, about their faith and the covenants and their relationship with the Lord, and how they have returned with their hearts turned toward us and seek to turn our hearts toward them, I see it as a beautiful thing. I am sure these men would never act like this today toward women. Somehow, we need to put these “armchair patriarchs” in their place while revering the better aspects of the true Patriarchs.]

Gen 18:11 And now Abraham and Sarah being old, and stricken in age; therefore it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women;

[She was long past menopause.]

Gen 18:12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself **[chuckled to herself]**, saying, After I have waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also **[She was human and had a “dirty mind”].?**

Gen 18:13 And the angel of the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is anything too hard for the Lord?

[Laughter is also a form of rejection. Sarah couldn’t conceive of the idea of conceiving a child, and the thought struck her as ludicrous. She is lucky. When Zacharias was told he and Elizabeth were to have a child, he disbelieved and the angel struck him dumb.]

Gen 18:14 At the time appointed, behold, I will return unto thee from my journey, which the Lord hath sent me; and according to the time of life thou mayest know that Sarah shall have a son.

Gen 18:15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay, but thou didst laugh.

[The prophecy of a son was given. Sarah finally enters the conversation. With this assurance, she denied having laughed, but the angel knew the thoughts and intents of her heart.]

Gen 18:16 And the angels rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

[The angels had business to attend to in Sodom and Gomorrah, and were off and on their way, and Abraham saw them off.]

Gen 18:17 And the angel of the Lord, said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which the Lord will do for him; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

[Surely the Lord God will do nothing until he reveals his counsel unto his servants the prophets. (new translation). As the Lord’s servant on the ground, Abraham was entitled to know. In the “Writings of Abraham”, and in a few verses below, we read that Abraham actually participated in the final cursing of the two cities. This follows a divine pattern. (1) God first works out a plan with his heavenly council.

The business of heaven is done in councils. You can read all about it in the Old Testament. The Hebrew word is *sod*. Do a Google search on “the sod of God”. You will be amazed. (2) Angels or divine messengers (*melek*) deliver the message to the prophets. (3) Prophets, with permission from the Lord and having the Sealing Power, speak the words given to them, and it is done. This was how Moses parted the Red Sea. This is how the will of God is done on earth as it is in heaven.]

Gen 18:18 For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he has spoken of him.

[The Lord knew that Abraham was true and faithful, and could be trusted to be included in their plans.]

Gen 18:19 And the angel of the Lord said unto Abraham, The Lord said unto us, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will destroy them.

Gen 18:20 **And I will send you, and ye shall go down now, and see that their iniquities are rewarded unto them.**

[Abraham was their witness/servant on the ground, as mentioned above.]

Gen 18:21 And ye shall have all things done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me.

[People who suffered because of the iniquities of Sodom and Gomorrah cried out to the Lord for redress.]

Gen 18:22 And if ye do it not, 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.

[Abraham had the option not to participate, but the sin should then be upon his head.]

Gen 18:23 And the angels which were holy men, and were sent forth after the order of God, turned their faces from thence and went toward Sodom.

[We read about the Holy Order of God in connection with the sermon about Melchizedek in Alma 13.]

Gen 18:24 But Abraham stood yet before the Lord, remembering the things which had been told him.

[But Abraham had a thing or two to say about the Lord’s plans, and he was in a position to reason with the Lord and influence the decrees of heaven.]

Gen 18:25 And Abraham drew near to Sodom, and said unto the Lord, calling upon his name, saying, Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? Wilt thou not spare them?

Gen 18:26 Peradventure there may be fifty righteous within the city, wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that may be therein?

Gen 18:27 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.

Gen 18:28 O God, may that be far from thee, for shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Gen 18:29 And the Lord said unto Abraham, If thou findest in Sodom, fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

Gen 18:30 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 dust and ashes;

Gen 18:31 Will the Lord spare them peradventure there lack five of the fifty righteous; wilt thou destroy all the city for their wickedness, if I find there forty and five righteous?

Gen 18:32 And he said, I will not destroy, but spare them.

Gen 18:33 And he spake unto him again, and said, Peradventure there should be forty found there?

Gen 18:34 And he said, I will not destroy it for forty's sake.

Gen 18:35 And he said again unto the Lord, O, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there?

Gen 18:36 And he said, I will not destroy them if thou shalt find thirty there.

Gen 18:37 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord; wilt thou destroy them if peradventure there shall twenty be found there?

Gen 18:38 And he said, I will not destroy them for twenty's sake.

Gen 18:39 And Abraham said unto the Lord, O, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once, peradventure ten shall be found there?

Gen 18:40 And the Lord said, I will not destroy them for ten's sake. And the Lord ceased speaking with Abraham.

Gen 18:41 And as soon as he had left communing with the Lord, Abraham went his way.

Gen 18:42 And it came to pass that Abraham returned unto his tent.

[The Lord does not delight in the suffering or destruction of His children, no matter what the fire and brimstone preachers would scare you into believing. The Lord was open to bargaining with Abraham, and probably wanted to see how Abraham would respond. Like Christ pleading before the Father, Abraham pleaded before the Lord to spare the cities for the sakes of the righteous within them. In the end there were only four righteous souls in the city, and after they left town, the cities were destroyed.]

CHAPTER 19

Overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah -- Lot's integrity -- Mercy of God -- Lot's flight -- Lot's wife perished -- Iniquity of Lot's daughters.

Gen 19:1 And it came to pass, that there came three angels to Sodom in the evening; and Lot sat in the door of his house, in the city of Sodom.

Gen 19:2 And Lot, seeing the angels, rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

[Lot knew they were just and holy men.]

Gen 19:3 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways.

Gen 19:4 And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

[Like Abraham, Lot was welcoming and hospitable to strangers. As mentioned before, one of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah was to not welcome strangers, but to abuse them sexually. I haven't located any references where they regularly practiced homosexuality or gang rape on each other, only on strangers from out of town. High Nibley tells a story where the inhabitants of those cities were so selfish, they placed netting over their trees so that birds could not land and eat the fruit thereof. According to Jewish writings, people from out of town were charged a toll to enter the gates of the city, and anybody who helped homeless people was burned alive. Lot invited his guest into his house, but they wanted to spend the night in the street in order to witness for themselves the brutality of the inhabitants of the cities. They wanted to see whether the people had sufficiently ripened in iniquity in order to merit destruction.]

Gen 19:5 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

[Lot prevailed upon his guests to come in and eat supper.]

Gen 19:6 But before they lay down to rest, the men of the city of Sodom compassed the house round, even men which were both old and young, even the people from every quarter;

Gen 19:7 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in unto thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know **[not just have sex, but gang rape]** them.

[These men have been referred to as the Lord and two angels, from the city of Salem. But they must have been translated in order for the people of Sodom to see them. This was no vision. They were actually present.]

Gen 19:8 And Lot went out of the door, unto them, and shut the door after him **[Lot stepped outside and shut the door behind him in order to protect his guests from the mob that had gathered outside his door and were trying to force their way in.]**, and said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

Gen 19:9 And they said unto him, Stand back. And they were angry with him.

Gen 19:10 And they said among themselves, This one man came in to sojourn among us, and he will needs now make himself to be a judge; now we will deal worse with him than with them.

[The mob was angry that they even allowed Lot to dwell among them, even for a short time, and they were even angrier when Lot tried to prevent them from carrying out their customary "welcome" to strangers.]

Gen 19:11 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 **[have our way with them]**.

Gen 19: 12 Now this was after the wickedness of Sodom.

[This was the pattern of life in Sodom and Gomorrah. What a way to treat Lot, especially after all Abraham had done to rescue them from Chedorlaomer and return their possessions!]

Gen 19:13 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 unto them as seemeth good in your eyes;

[Lot even offered his two daughters to appease the mob.]

Gen 19:14 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.

[Lot was so anxious to protect the visitors from Salem, that he offered his own daughters. The mob wanted both the men and his daughters.]

Gen 19:15 And they were angry with Lot and came near to break the door, but the angels of God, which were holy men, put forth their hand and pulled Lot into the house unto them, and shut the door.

[Fearing for Lot, the angels pulled him inside to safety and shut the door.]

Gen 19:16 And they smote the men with blindness, both small and great, that they could not come at the door.

[The angels had seen enough. They knew exactly how far these men were willing to go. The men, up to this point, had done nothing to Lot, the angels, or his daughters, but God judges us on the intents of our hearts even if it is not possible to carry out our deeds. And, this applies to the good intentions of our hearts – the good we would do, were we not prevented from doing it, and the evil we would do, were we not prevented from doing it.]

Gen 19:17 And they were angry, so that they wearied themselves to find the door, and could not find it.

[It was now time to destroy the city, but first the angels had to buy some time for Lot and his family to escape, so they smote the mob with blindness. Picture this whole scene in your mind.]

Gen 19:18 And these holy men said unto Lot, Hast thou any here besides thy sons-in-law, and thy son's sons and thy daughters?

Gen 19:19 And they commanded Lot, saying, Whatsoever thou hast in the city, thou shalt bring out of this place, for we will destroy this place;

[The angels told Lot to gather up his family and possessions and prepare to leave.]

Gen 19:20 Because the cry of them is waxen **[has grown]** great, and their abominations have come up before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.

[The angels warned Lot what was about to happen and why. When we recount the abominations of Sodom and Gomorrah and compare them to people whom we wish to judge today, we must use exactness in evaluating the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, neither adding to nor taking therefrom. Their sins were greed, lack of hospitality to the stranger within their gates, and also to sexually brutalizing both men and women for their own pleasures and lusts. These are the sins we ought to

recognize and condemn, not the same-sex couple which is faithful and monogamous. After Romans 1, the chapter which condemns the behavior of Sodom and Gomorrah, but which is applied to all same-sex couples, Paul follows with the little-quoted Romans 2:]

Rom 2:1 **Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.**

Rom 2:2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. Rom 2:3 **And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?** Rom 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Rom 2:5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Rom 2:6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds: Rom 2:11 For there is no respect of persons with God. Rom 2:12 **For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;**

Gen 19:21 And Lot went out and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get ye out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city.

Gen 19:22 But he seemed as one that mocked, unto his sons-in-law.

[Lot first tried to persuade his sons-in-law, not his daughters, but they wouldn't listen.]

Gen 19:23 And when the morning came, the angels hastened Lot **[Get a move on!]**, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which are here, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

Gen 19:24 And while he lingered the angels laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto them; and they brought them forth, and set them down without the city.

[Translated beings are able to perform the sort of rescue where they are able to translocate "teleport" people in order to rescue them from danger and bring them to safety. This is the type of rescue that the 144,000 will be performing to miraculously rescue righteous people who are prepared and bring them to Zion.]

Gen 19:25 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad that they said unto them, Escape for your lives; look not behind you, neither stay you in all the plain; escape to the mountain lest you be consumed.

[God will only do for you that which you cannot do for yourself. Lot's family was divinely delivered out of the city, but they had to make it the rest of the way to the mountains on foot.]

Gen 19:26 And Lot said unto one of them, Oh, not so my Lord! behold now, thy servant has found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil overtake me, and I die.

Gen 19:27 Behold now, here is another city, and this is near to flee unto and it is a little one; oh, let me escape thither, and may the Lord not destroy it, and my soul shall live.

Gen 19:28 And the angel said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken; haste thee, escape thither, for I cannot do anything until thou be come thither.

[Lot feared being left alone in the mountains, so he, like Abraham, bargained with the angels to let him go to a nearby city. The angels agreed, but told him to hurry, because they could not cause the destruction to occur until they were in safety.]

Gen 19:29 And the name of the city was called Zoar. Therefore the sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

Gen 19:30 And the Lord did not destroy Sodom until Lot had entered into Zoar.

[The Lord waited until Lot and family were safely in Zoar before destroying the cities of the plain.]

Gen 19:31 And then, when Lot had entered into Zoar, the Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah; for the angels called upon the name of the Lord for brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.

[The angels could have used natural means, under their direction, and at Abraham's command to bring about the destruction. After all, these cities were in an active fault zone with tar and asphalt pits nearby. There could have also been some volcanic activity.]

Gen 19:32 And thus they overthrew those cities and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

[Some legends say the whole area was lush and beautiful before the destruction happened, and this was what made the Dead Sea dead.]

Gen 19:33 But it came to pass, when Lot fled, his wife looked back from behind him, and became a pillar of salt.

[They were warned not to look back, but somebody just had to look.]

Gen 19:34 And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord; and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and behold, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

[But, Abraham looked, as well, only at a distance. He knew what was coming and witnessed the aftermath at a distance.]

Gen 19:35 And it came to pass, when God had destroyed the cities of the plain, that God spake unto Abraham, saying, I have remembered Lot, and sent him out of the midst of the overthrow, that thy brother might not be destroyed, when I overthrew the city in the which thy brother Lot dwelt.

Gen 19:36 And Abraham was comforted. And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar. And he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

[The Lord told Abraham what had happened and the Lot and his two daughters were safe, as the Lord knew Abraham would be concerned about their safety.]

Gen 19:37 And the firstborn dealt wickedly, and said unto the younger, Our father has become old, and we have not a man on the earth to come in unto us, to live with us after the manner of all that live on the earth;

Gen 19:38 Therefore come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

Gen 19:39 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.

Gen 19:40 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.

Gen 19:41 And 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.

Gen 19:42 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

[Meanwhile, “back at the ranch”, there was hanky-panky afoot. No doubt influenced by the culture of Sodom, but probably due to boredom, Lot’s daughters used the excuse of the custom of raising up seed to their father to get Lot drunk and get him to sleep with them, individually. This bears some similarity to Ham who got his father Noah drunk and uncovered Noah’s nakedness. Ham didn’t have sex with his father, but was still cursed for having done revealed his father’s nakedness.]

Gen 19:43 And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab **[“of his father”]**; the father of the Moabites **[a people which later tried to prevent the children of Israel from returning to their promised land]**, the same which are unto this day.

Gen 19:44 And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi [son of my people]; the father of the children which are Ammonites **[The kingdom of Moab and the kingdom of Ammon were countries on the East of the Jordan River.]**; the same which are unto this day.

CHAPTER 20

Abraham goeth to Gerar -- Abraham and Sarah reproved by Abimelech.

Gen 20:1 And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar **[“lodging place”, located in south central Israel]**.

Gen 20:2 And Abraham said again of Sarah his wife, She is my sister.

Gen 20:3 And Abimelech **[“my father is king”]**, king of Gerar, sent and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said unto him, Behold, thou hast taken a woman which is not thine own, for she is Abraham's wife.

Gen 20:4 And the Lord said unto him, Thou shalt return her unto Abraham, for if thou do it not thou shalt die.

Gen 20:5 And Abimelech had not come near her; for the Lord had not suffered him.

[Same story as with Pharoah of Egypt. Even as an old woman, Sarah was a prize.]

Gen 20:6 And he said, Lord, wilt thou slay me, and also a righteous nation? Behold, said he not unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself said, He is my brother; and in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.

Gen 20:7 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 to touch her.

Gen 20:8 Now, therefore, restore the man's wife to him, for he is a prophet, and he shall pray 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.

[Abimelech was a righteous man, and the Lord promised not to curse him if he returned Sarah to Abraham and asked Abraham to pray for him.]

Gen 20:9 Therefore, Abimelech arose early in the morning, and called his servants, and told all these things in their ears; and the men were sore afraid.

Gen 20:10 Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and in what have I offended thee that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin?

Gen 20:11 Thou hast done things unto me that ought not to be done. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

Gen 20:12 And Abraham said, Because I thought assuredly the fear of God was not in this place, and they would slay me for my wife's sake;

Gen 20:13 And yet indeed she was my sister; she was the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

[Abraham thought he would be in danger, so he told the king that Sarah was his sister. Sarah was Abraham's wife and half-sister. Abraham told the truth, just not the whole truth.]

Gen 20:14 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This shall be thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me, at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother.

[Sarah was also in on this little white lie.]

Gen 20:15 And Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave unto Abraham, and restored unto him Sarah his wife.

Gen 20:16 And Abimelech said, Behold, my land lieth before thee; dwell where it pleaseth thee.

[The Pharoah also give Abraham's wife back to him and also made up for the mistake by giving Abraham sheep, oxen, and servants. If I didn't know better, I'd say Abraham and Sarah were running a racket.]

Gen 20:17 And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver; behold, he shall give unto thee a covering of the eyes, and it shall be a token unto all that thou mayest not be taken again from Abraham thy husband. And thus she was reprov'd.

[The king put an end to this.]

Gen 20:18 So Abraham prayed unto God; and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants, and they bare unto him children.

Gen 20:19 For because of Sarah, Abraham's wife, the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech.

CHAPTER 21

A son born to Abraham -- Isaac named -- Bondwoman cast out -- Covenant with Abimelech.

Gen 21:1 And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken by the mouth of his angels; for Sarah conceived and bear Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which the angels of God had spoken to him.

Gen 21:2 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bear unto him, **Isaac.**

Gen 21:3 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac **[The first baby of his offspring that he circumcised. The first baby boy to be circumcised at the correct day: 8 days old. This must have been a great moment for Abraham.]**, Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

Gen 21:4 **And Abraham was an hundred years old**, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

Gen 21:5 And Sarah said, God has made me to rejoice; and also all that know me will rejoice with me.

Gen 21:6 And she said unto Abraham, Who would have said that Sarah should have given children suck? For I was barren, but the Lord promised, and I have borne unto Abraham a son in his old age.

[Both Abraham and Sarah rejoiced, as we might suppose. Not only for their son, but that God kept His promise about Isaac's birth. This must have given them great faith concerning the future fulfillment of God's promised concerning Abraham's seed.]

Gen 21:7 And the child grew, and was weaned **[no longer on mother's milk]**. And the day that Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a great feast, and Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which Hagar had borne unto Abraham, mocking; and she was troubled.

Gen 21:8 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, Isaac.

Gen 21:9 And this thing was very grievous unto Abraham because of his son.

[Hagar was jealous because of all the attention showered on Isaac. Sarah wanted Hagar and Ishmael gone. Think how Abraham felt. He was torn. Ishmael was his son, but not Sarah's.]

Gen 21:10 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight, because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah has said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

[It was probably hard for Abraham to be objective, given that Ishmael was his son, and he had probably grown attached to him over the years. Listen to your wife. Your chosen seed will come through Isaac.]

Gen 21:11 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation **[Ishmael will also become a nation, because of the promises made to Abraham.]**, because he is thy seed.

Gen 21:12 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave unto Hagar, and she took the child, and he sent her away; and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

[Abraham was always looking out for other people, so he provided them with food for their journey. Hagar and Ishmael were probably headed for her home in Egypt. Beersheba is the name of a well in southern Israel.]

Gen 21:13 And it came to pass that the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs, and she went and sat her down over against the child, a good way off, as it were a bowshot; for she said, Let me not see the death of the child.

Gen 21:14 And she sat over against the child, and lifted up her voice and wept.

Gen 21:15 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of the Lord called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her;

[The Lord heard Ishmael's prayer and answered his mother. Here is an instance of the Lord speaking to a woman out of heaven.]

Gen 21:16 What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he lieth; arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand, for I will make of him a great nation.

Gen 21:17 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad drink.

[Hagar had faith and did what the Lord said. Even though they didn't get along, Sarah taught her well.]

Gen 21:18 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer; and he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, he and his mother.

Gen 21:19 And he took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

[Ishmael took a wife out of his mother's native Egypt, but the bloodline of Israel was preserved through Isaac.]

Gen 21:20 And it came to pass at the time, that Abimelech and Phicol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest.

[People noticed that God was constantly blessing Abraham. He didn't have it easy, but Abraham was blessed in all his trials.]

Gen 21:21 Now therefore, swear unto me here, that, by the help of God 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 shown unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.

Gen 21:22 And Abraham said, I will swear.

Gen 21:23 And Abraham reproved Abimelech, because of a well of water which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away.

[Abraham pledged to always deal honestly with Abimelech, which gave Abraham the opportunity to finally speak frankly about a well which Abimelech's servants had taken away from Abraham's servants.]

Gen 21:24 And Abimelech said, Thou didst not tell me; and I know not who hath done this thing; neither yet have I heard that it was done until this day.

[Why didn't Abraham bring this up earlier? Abraham was just a "good guy".]

Gen 21:25 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant.

Gen 21:26 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

Gen 21:27 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What wilt thou do with these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

Gen 21:28 And he said, Seven ewe lambs shalt thou take at my hand, that they may be a witness unto me that I have digged this well.

[Abraham wanted to make this arrangement with the well, all nice and legal (for those days). He also wanted it clear that he dug the well.]

Gen 21:29 And because they swear, both of them, wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba **[well of the oath]**;

Gen 21:30 And thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba;

[This being a desert, water was precious back then. It literally meant life, as we saw with Hagar and Ishmael.]

Gen 21:31 Then Abimelech, and Phicol, the chief captain of his hosts, rose up, and they planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord; and they returned unto the land of the Philistines.

Gen 21:32 And Abraham worshiped the everlasting God, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days.

[Having secured the ownership rights to the well at Beersheba, Abraham further puts down roots, so to speak, by planting a tamarisk tree. Tamarisk trees could reach 30 feet high and would provide excellent shade in the desert climate of the region. The planting of a tree required a reliable water source, and this further symbolizes the importance of this location.]

I lived for several years in the California low desert. The climate is very similar to the Middle East. In fact, they imported many plants from the Middle East in the area, including huge banks of Tamarisk trees which serve as a wind break to stop the blowing sand from drifting up over houses and buildings.]

CHAPTER 22

Abraham commanded to offer Isaac -- His willingness accepted -- Relieved by divine interposition -- Names of Nahor's children.

Gen 22:1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did try Abraham and said unto him, Abraham; and Abraham said, Behold, here am I.

[God had a lesson for both Abraham and Isaac in the form of a trial. God called Abraham, and Abraham answered Him immediately. We are commanded to do the works of Abraham. This is an example that we should follow. Be observant to hear the voice of God, and answer him immediately.]

Gen 22:2 And the Lord said, Take now thy son, thine only Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains of which I will tell thee.

Gen 22:3 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,

Gen 22:4 And clave the wood for the burnt offering; and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

Gen 22:5 Then on the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off.

[Abraham didn't hesitate, rationalize, or argue. He just did it. He showed God his willingness to sacrifice even his son, not only laying Isaac upon the altar, but all his hopes, dreams, and plans for the future.]

Gen 22:6 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide you here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come to you again.

[Abraham and Isaac left their servants behind, and went alone, together up to the altar. This was a familiar place. They had been there before.]

Gen 22:7 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon his back; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and Isaac his son; and they went both of them together.

Gen 22:8 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father! And he said, Here am I, my son.

[Abraham was just as responsive to his son as he was to the Lord.]

Gen 22:9 And he said, Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

Gen 22:10 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. So they went both of them together; and they came to the place of which God had told him.

[By now, Isaac was beginning to notice that there was no lamb for the offering, but Abraham prophesied that God would provide a sacrifice.]

Gen 22:11 And Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.

[Isaac didn't have the time to mull this over in his mind as Abraham did. This is a great credit to Isaac that he obeyed his father, and immediately complied. I don't need to emphasize that this was a great illustration of the relationship between the Father and the Son. Both Abraham and Isaac learned lessons that day, which they could learn in no other way. Another reason why this was particularly poignant to Abraham was because he himself was once offered on an altar built to false gods, but an angel intervened and saved him at the last second.]

Gen 22:12 And Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

[Here's what I learned about Abraham that changes forever peoples' thinking and understanding about Abraham, and his relationship to God.

Just before Abraham thrust the knife into Isaac, he thought to God: "Lord, if you must have a perfect sacrifice, and if you must raise up seed to Israel in the Everlasting Covenant, I would offer a solution."

When Abraham first found God, the Lord told Abraham to walk before him and to be perfect. The Lord showed Abraham the great and noble spirits before the world was, one of whom volunteered to be sent to be the great offering for all mankind. Abraham was God's friend and was wont to reason with the Lord.

"I offer myself as an offering in Isaac's stead, only let the boy live. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

God said: *"It is well. I knew you would say that. You are truly the Abraham I know and love. I hereby accept both your offerings."*

And, then He sent the angel to stop Abraham, and provided a ram to take Isaac's place.

God knows beforehand the choices we will make, yet he puts us in situations where we can choose to align with His will and follow our noble nature, or choose a lesser path.]

Gen 22:13 And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham! Abraham! And Abraham said, Here am I.

[Abraham was ready and willing to follow through, but this was enough. The Lord could clearly see the thoughts and intentions of their hearts.]

Gen 22:14 And the angel said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him;

[Ponder that you came through an ancestor who was almost killed, but an angel intervened. We have that angel to thank for our lives today.]

Gen 22:15 For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only Isaac from me.

[Again, God was looking for that right intention. He probably already knew that Abraham had it, but Abraham needed to learn that he had it.]

"You will have all kinds of trials to pass through. And it is quite as necessary for you to be tried as it was for Abraham and other men of God... God will feel after you, and He will take hold of you and wrench your very heart strings and if you cannot stand it you will not be fit for an inheritance in the Celestial kingdom of God" - John Taylor recalls the words of Joseph Smith to the Twelve. JS manual page 231"

"It is in vain for persons to fancy to themselves that they are heirs with those, or can be heirs with them, who have offered their all in sacrifice, and by this means obtain faith in God and favor with him so as to obtain eternal life, unless they, in like manner, offer unto him the same sacrifice, and through that offering obtain the knowledge that they are accepted of him." Lecture 6]

Gen 22:16 And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind a thicket, there was a ram caught in it by his horns.

Gen 22:17 And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering, in the stead of his son.

[It is interesting to think that Isaac was called to die in the place of the lamb, but the ram was called to die in the place of Isaac. And Christ was called to die in our place.]

Gen 22:18 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh [**"The Lord will Provide"**]; as it is said unto this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

Gen 22:19 And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said,

Gen 22:20 Thus saith the Lord, I have sworn by myself, that because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only Isaac from me;

Gen 22:21 That in blessing I will bless thee; and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore.

[God immediately blesses Abraham and his seed again.]

Gen 22:22 And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

[Doing something as simple as following the voice of the Lord leads to great blessings, and eventually to His Presence.]

Gen 22:23 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

Gen 22:24 And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying,

Gen 22:25 Behold, Milcah [**“queen”, Abraham’s sister-in-law**], she hath also borne children unto thy brother Nahor; Huz [**“wooded”**] is his firstborn, and Buz [**“contempt”**] is his brother.

Gen 22:26 And Kemuel is the father of Aram, and Chesed, and Haza, and Bildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel;

Gen 22:27 And Bethuel begat **Rebekah [Isaac’s future wife]**.

Gen 22:28 These eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother; and his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah.

CHAPTER 23

Sarah's death and burial -- Purchase of the field of Ephron.

Gen 23:1 And Sarah was an hundred and twenty-seven years old, and she died [**The only woman in the Bible whose exact age is given.**]; and thus ended the years of the life of Sarah.

[The document “The Writings of Abraham” has it that Sarah died which Abraham and Isaac were out performing the sacrifice, and that Sarah and Isaac were very close. If true, then the last time Sarah saw Isaac was when he and his father departed, and Sarah mourned that she would never see their son again.]

Gen 23:2 And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is now called Hebron, in the land of Canaan.

Gen 23:3 And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her, his wife which was dead.

Gen 23:4 And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth [**“terror”, a son of Canaan and progenitor of the Hittites.**], saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you; give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

Gen 23:5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord; **thou art a mighty prince among us**; in the choicest of our sepulchers bury thou thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulcher, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

[The sons of Heth had great respect for Abraham and offered him the best that they had.]

Gen 23:6 And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, and to the children of Heth; and he communed with them, saying,

Gen 23:7 If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat Ephron the son of Zohar for me, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah [**“cave of the double tombs” or “cave of the patriarchs”, located in the now city of Hebron and sacred to Jews and Arabs**], which he hath in the end of his field;

Gen 23:8 For, as much money as it is worth he shall have, if he will give it me for a possession of a burying-place among you.

Gen 23:9 And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth.

Gen 23:10 And Ephron, the Hittite, answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, among all of them that went in at the gates of the city, saying,

Gen 23:11 Hearken, my lord, and hear me; the field I give thee, and the cave that is therein; I give it thee in the presence of the sons of my people; and I give it thee; therefore, bury thy dead.

Gen 23:12 And Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land, and he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, I pray thee, hear me;

Gen 23:13 If thou wilt take it of me, I will give thee money for the field, and I will bury my dead there, but I will give thee money for it.

[Abraham paid them good money for the best cave available so he could claim title to it.]

Gen 23:14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, My lord, hearken unto me; the land thou shalt have for four hundred shekels of silver; what shall that be betwixt me and thee? Bury therefore thy dead.

Gen 23:15 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed unto Ephron the silver which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, which was current with the merchant.

[This is the first financial transaction recorded in the Bible. Abraham wanted to lay absolute claim to the land.]

Gen 23:16 And the field of Ephron, 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 unto Abraham for a possession, in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of the city.

[Abraham was a nomad, a sojourner in the land, but now he owned himself a piece of real estate.]

Gen 23:17 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre; the same is called Hebron, in the land of Canaan.

Gen 23:18 And the field and the cave that was therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying-place by the sons of Heth.

[It is said that Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, and Jacob and Rachel were all buried in this cave: "The Cave of the Patriarchs" (and Matriarchs)]

CHAPTER 24

Oath of Abraham's servant -- History of the betrothal and marriage of Isaac and Rebekah.

Gen 24:1 And now Abraham was old, being well stricken in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.

Gen 24:2 And Abraham said unto his eldest **[Eliezer of Damascus]** servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had; Put forth I pray thee thy hand under my hand **[I have to take exception with the "sanitized" translation here. We have been talking about grown men circumcising one another. Why can't a man place his hand where it says he places his hand instead of changing it to someplace else? The actual word used here is *yarek* and means thigh, side, loin, base. The word for "hand" is *yad*. Close, but not good enough. Gen. 22:14 correctly translates *hand* as hand where the angel takes Lot**

and family by the hand. Gen. 32:14 correctly translated thigh as thigh, when Jacob is wrestling with the angel. (Don't tell anybody, but the actual custom was to place a hand under the other person's genitals and make an oath to him and his seed.)), and I will make thee swear before the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth [Who is the "God of the earth" to Abraham?], that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son, of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell; but thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

[Abraham was about to send his most trusted servant on a vital mission: to find a wife for his son, Isaac. Arranged marriages sound "Patriarchal" to us, but this was the custom back then. So was placing your hand in a certain place to swear a solemn oath to Abraham, the God of Heaven and the God of the earth. It was critically important to Abraham to preserve the seed of Israel, to take a solemn wife from among his "kinfolk".]

Gen 24:3 And the servant said unto him, Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land, then I must needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest.

[The servant was afraid the woman he found would not want to leave a life in the civilized world to be the wife of a nomad, regardless of how wealthy he was.]

Gen 24:4 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again **[Again? Had Isaac been back to Mesopotamia before?]**.

[Isaac was precious to Abraham, and he feared losing him.]

Gen 24:5 The Lord God of heaven which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that swear unto me, saying, Unto thee will I give this land;

Gen 24:6 He shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

Gen 24:7 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this thine oath, only bring not my son thither **again**.

[If she refuses to come, you are free from your oath, but you may not bring Isaac with you.]

Gen 24:8 And the servant put his hand **[Fool me twice. (See verse 2.)]** under the hand of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

Gen 24:9 And the servant took ten camels of his master **[and also a dowry for the bride and her family]**, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand.

[Abraham trusted this servant with everything he had, and even once thought to make him his heir, yet he still made the servant swear a triple oath.]

Gen 24:10 And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor **[named after Abraham's grandfather?]**

Gen 24:11 And he made his camels to kneel down without the city, by a well of water, at evening, the time that women go out to draw water.

Gen 24:12 And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee this day, that thou wouldst show kindness unto my master Abraham, and send me good speed.

Gen 24:13 Behold, I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water;

Gen 24:14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; let her be the one whom thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master.

[Abraham's servant had faith, which he probably learned from Abraham. He was sent on an errand to find a wife for Isaac. In reality, this was an assignment from the Lord, so he asked the Lord for a sign whereby he might find the Lord's choice for the wife of Isaac.]

Gen 24:15 And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that behold, Rebekah [**"ensnarer"**] came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

[Sometimes, the Lord answers our prayer this fast. The Lord probably inspired the servant to ask for the specific sign. Rebecca was a descendant of Abraham's brother. This kind of reminds me of the story of Jesus waiting at Jacob's well for the woman from the Samaritan town to come out and meet Him.]

Gen 24:16 And the damsel being a virgin, very fair to look upon, such as the servant of Abraham had not seen, neither had any man known the like unto her; and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

Gen 24:17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

[Rebekah's beauty obviously attracted the servant. Could she be the one?]

Gen 24:18 And she said, Drink, my lord; and she hastened and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

Gen 24:19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

[She passed the test. This was not only the sign that she was the chosen wife, but she would make a kind and loving wife, and a good hostess to visitors, which was an important attribute back then.]

Gen 24:20 And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw, and drew for all his camels.

[Eliezer brought 10 camels with him. Enough to carry him, his goods, and to carry Rebekah and her entourage back to Abraham. Just a thought: Couldn't the ever-thoughtful Abraham have spared a camel or two to send Hagar and Ishmael back to Egypt?]

Gen 24:21 And the man, wondering at her, held his peace, pondering in his heart whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.

[The servant was taken aback. He asked for good speed and he received it.]

Gen 24:22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a gold earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold, and said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee; and is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?

[Now, if it were me, I would find out whose daughter she was first, and then show her the bling.]

Gen 24:23 And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

Gen 24:24 She said moreover, unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

Gen 24:25 And the man bowed down his head and worshiped the Lord.

Gen 24:26 And he said, Blessed is the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left my master destitute of his mercy and his truth; and when I was in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.

[Perfect answer! Eliezer must have been so grateful to the Lord. If Isaac was a type of the Lord, then Eliezer must have been a type of the servant of our Heavenly Father (for whom Abraham was a type). This servant was on a mission to find a suitable Bride (us) for the Bridegroom. If we prove our worthiness, then the servant leads us to the Bridegroom.]

Gen 24:27 And the damsel ran to the house, and told her mother these things.

Gen 24:28 And Rebekah had a brother, whose name was Laban; and Laban ran out to the man, unto the well.

Gen 24:29 And it came to pass when he saw the earrings, and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the word of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me, and I came unto the man, and behold, he stood by the camels at the well.

[When Laban saw the jewelry, he was all in. He must have also been impressed with Eliezer's relationship with the Lord.]

Gen 24:30 And he said, **Come in, thou blessed of the Lord;** wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

Gen 24:31 And the man came into the house.

Gen 24:32 And he unburdened his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet **[Eliezer brought others with him]** that came with him.

Gen 24:33 And there was set before him food to eat; but he said, I will not eat until I have told mine errand.

Gen 24:34 And Laban said, Speak on. And he said, I am Abraham's servant;

[This must have been a joyous family moment, but the servant would not eat until he told why he came.]

Gen 24:35 And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great, and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold; and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses.

Gen 24:36 And Sarah, my master's wife, bare a son to my master when she was old; and unto him hath he given all that he hath.

Gen 24:37 And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell;

[The servant told Rebekah's family all about Abraham and why he came.]

Gen 24:38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

Gen 24:39 And I said unto my master, Perhaps the woman will not follow me.

Gen 24:40 And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and he will prosper thy way;

[Abraham has told Eliezer that an angel would come before him and prepare the way.]

Gen 24:41 And thou shalt take a wife for my son, of my kindred, and of my father's house; then shalt thou be clear of my oath.

Gen 24:42 When thou comest to my kindred, and if they give thee not a wife for my son, thou shalt be clear from my oath.

Gen 24:43 And I came this day unto the well, and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, if now thou wilt prosper my way which I go;

Gen 24:44 Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me I pray thee a little water of thy pitcher to drink;

Gen 24:45 And if she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels; the same is the woman whom the Lord hath appointed out for my master's son.

Gen 24:46 And before I had done speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder, and she went down unto the well and drew water.

Gen 24:47 And I said unto her, Let me drink I pray thee;

Gen 24:48 And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; so I drank, and she made the camels drink also.

Gen 24:49 And I asked her and said, Whose daughter art thou?

Gen 24:50 And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him.

Gen 24:51 And I gave the earrings unto her, to put into her ears, and the bracelets upon her hands.

Gen 24:52 And I bowed down my head, and worshiped the Lord, and blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

[It was the custom to retell stories like this. This story was probably handed down from generation to generation.]

Gen 24:53 And now, if thou wilt deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand or to the left.

[Eliezer awaited the decision of Rebekah's father and brother, as if Rebekah had nothing to say in the matter.]

Gen 24:54 Then Laban and Bethuel answered, and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord; we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

[The father and the brother were convinced this was of God, and left all judgment with Him.]

Gen 24:55 Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken.

[They agreed.]

Gen 24:56 And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard these words, he worshiped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth.

[A good and faithful servant. No wonder he served Abraham all his life and was his closest confidant.]

Gen 24:57 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave to Rebekah. He gave also to her brother, and to her mother, precious things.

[Presents for the family.]

Gen 24:58 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night.

Gen 24:59 And they arose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master.

Gen 24:60 And her brother, and her mother, said, Let the damsel abide with us at the least ten days; after that she shall go.

Gen 24:61 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way; send me away, that I may go unto my master.

Gen 24:62 And they said, We will call the damsel and inquire at her mouth.

[After partying all night Eliezer wanted to hurry back to Abraham and Isaac, with his new bride. Can you blame him? But the family wanted Rebekah to stay awhile. After all, they would probably never see her again. They all agreed to let Rebekah have her say in the matter.]

Gen 24:63 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man?

Gen 24:64 And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men.

Gen 24:65 And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, O thou, our sister, be thou blessed of thousands -- of millions; and let thy seed possess the gate of those who hate them.

[Rebekah agreed to go, and the family happily blessed her and sent her on her way.]

Gen 24:66 And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man; and the servant took Rebekah and went his way.

[Rebekah had to bring back her servants. This family must have been well-off, too.]

Gen 24:67 And Isaac came from the way of the well La-hai-roi **[This is where Isaac dwelt, and was the well where Hagar saw the angel.]**; for he dwelt in the south country.

Gen 24:68 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide; and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold the camels coming.

Gen 24:69 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel; for she said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?

Gen 24:70 And the servant said, It is my master; therefore she took a veil and covered herself.

[Isaac was out at his evening meditation. He saw the camels approaching, and Rebecca caught a glimpse of Isaac. He was about 37 at this time. She was impressed at his appearance and that he was a man of God.]

Gen 24:71 And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

[The servant told Isaac everything that happened. Good practice: return and report.]

Gen 24:72 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her.

[It doesn't mention any particular marriage ceremony, but there must have been something. Some of the events leading up the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah have been institutionalized in the traditional Jewish wedding ceremony. Before the bride and bridegroom stand under the *chuppah* [canopy], they take part in a special ceremony called *badeken* (veiling). The bridegroom is led to the bride by two escorts and, seeing her, covers her face with a veil, like the way Rebecca covered her face before marrying Isaac. Then the bridegroom (or the father of the bride, or the officiating rabbi) recites the same blessing over the bride that Rebecca's family recited over her, "Our sister, may you come to be thousands of myriads, and may your offspring inherit the gate of its foes."]

Gen 24:73 And Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

[This is a beautiful love story. We can liken it to our marriage with Christ, the Bridegroom.]

CHAPTER 25

Abraham marrieth Keturah -- His death -- The generations of Ishmael -- His death -- The birth of Esau and Jacob -- Esau selleth his birthright.

Gen 25:1 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah **[“incense”]**.

Gen 25:2 And she bare him Zimran **[“musician”]**, and Jokshan **[“snarer”]**, and Medan **[“contention”]**, and Midian **[“strife”]**, and Ishbak **[“he releases”]**, and Shuah **[“wealth”]**.

Gen 25:3 And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.

Gen 25:4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

Gen 25:5 And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.

Gen 25:6 But unto the sons of the concubines **[This might seem confusing, since we were reading about Abraham's new wife, but the actual word used in the Bible is *ishshah*, which is translated either *woman* or *wife*.]**, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.

[So, Abraham had six more sons, and who knows how many daughters with Keturah, but he gave them all gifts and sent them away so they wouldn't influence Isaac.]

Gen 25:7 And these are the number of the years of Abraham's life, which he lived, a hundred threescore and fifteen years **[175 years. This is a lot shorter lifespan than people before the flood. After the flood, people still lived long lives, but they got shorter and shorter over the years].**

Gen 25:8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

Gen 25:9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre;

Gen 25:10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth; there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

[Abraham was buried next to Sarah. The Bible goes to great length to describe this burial site. The only land that Abraham actually owned in all of the land that the Lord gave him and his posterity.]

Gen 25:11 And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac, and Isaac dwelt by the well La-hai-roi.

[This is where Isaac dwelt all his life. The place was also called Beer Sheba, as discussed earlier.]

Gen 25:12 Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham;

Gen 25:13 And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations; the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam.

Gen 25:14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa.

Gen 25:15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah;

Gen 25:16 These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

[Back to Ishmael. Since Abraham was all about posterity, the Bible lists it.]

Gen 25:17 And these are the number of the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years; and he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people.

Gen 25:18 And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria; and he died in the presence of all his brethren.

[Everybody gathered for his death. He must have been honored and remembered by the entire family as Abraham's eldest son.]

Gen 25:19 And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son; Abraham begat Isaac;

Gen 25:20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

Gen 25:21 And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, that she might bare children, because she was barren. And the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebekah **[Contrary to D&C 132, Isaac did not practice polygamy.]** his wife conceived.

[Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob each had problems with their chosen wives conceiving and bearing children. Hagar? Keturah? No problem.]

Gen 25:22 And the children struggled together within her womb; and she said, If I am with child, why is it thus with me? **And she went to inquire of the Lord.**

Gen 25:23 And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

Gen 25:24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were **[fraternal]** twins in her womb.

Gen 25:25 And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau **["hairy"]**.

Gen 25:26 And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob **["heel catcher" or "supplanter"]**; and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.

Gen 25:27 And the boys grew; and Esau was a cunning **[He knew things.]** hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain **[There are a lot of meanings for this word, which is tam: whole, complete, sound, wholesome, quiet and ordinary, complete, morally and ethically pure.]** man, dwelling in tents.

Gen 25:28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

[This is an interesting family dynamic. I could see where Isaac preferred Esau. Esau was interesting. Jacob was quiet, ordinary, and a mama's boy. But you can't always go by appearances. Rebekah had the discernment to see which one the Lord chose. The Lord told her "The older shall serve the younger." We will read in "The Writings of Abraham" how Isaac and Sarah were also very close.]

Have you done your genealogy? Have you read about your ancestors? Did they do things that made you proud? Do you find some of their same traits in you? How about these people we are reading about now? Does it make you proud to be descended from them?]

Gen 25:29 And Jacob sod pottage [**boiled food, soup**]; and Esau came from the field, and he was faint [**exhausted**];

Gen 25:30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom [**“red”, The name of the country where Esau’s descendants dwelt.**].

Gen 25:31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

[Jacob might have been quiet, but he was not dumb. Where was Rebekah? Wasn’t cooking “wimmin’s work”?]

Gen 25:32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point of dying; and what shall this birthright profit me?

Gen 25:33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

[This is an object lesson: don’t trade away something valuable for the temporary needs of the moment.]

Gen 25:34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus, Esau despised [**had disdain for, thought to be worthless**] his birthright.

[Frankly, I don’t get it. Abraham was very wealthy. He gave everything to Isaac. Wouldn’t that make Isaac also quite wealthy? Esau would have inherited it. What was this boy thinking? Or, maybe he wasn’t thinking. Jacob took the birthright by stratagem. He must have observed his brother for a long time and perceived his weakness, then waited for the right opportunity. His name means “supplanter”. This is exactly what Jacob did.]

CHAPTER 26

Isaac goeth to Gerar -- God blesseth him -- He denieth his wife -- Esau marrieth.

Gen 26:1 And there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.

[This is where Abraham first lived. He and Abimelech were friends.]

Gen 26:2 And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of.

Gen 26:3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father;

Gen 26:4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

Gen 26:5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

Gen 26:6 And Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

[Isaac learned to hear the voice of the Lord, and he listened. He inherited the same promises given to his father.]

Gen 26:7 And the men of the place asked him concerning his wife; and he said, She is my sister; for he feared to say, She in my wife; lest, the men of the place should kill him for to get Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.

[Same thing as Abraham.]

Gen 26:8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting **[flirting]** with Rebekah his wife.

Gen 26:9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety Rebekah is thy wife; and how saidst thou she is thy sister? And Isaac said unto him, I said it because I feared lest I die for her.

[Isaac was found out.]

Gen 26:10 And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.

Gen 26:11 And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

[Similar to Abraham.]

Gen 26:12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year a hundredfold; and the Lord blessed him.

Gen 26:13 And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great;

Gen 26:14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants; and the Philistines envied him.

[Isaac inherited Abraham's wealth, and the Lord prospered Isaac in his own right, but the Philistines were having none of it.]

Gen 26:15 For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

[Water and land were the sources of wealth. If you can't beat 'em, stop 'em, thought the Philistines.]

Gen 26:16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

Gen 26:17 And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

Gen 26:18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham, and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

[Isaac returned to the lands of his father, reopened the wells, and renamed them their old names. This shows you how important water was: they would actually name each well.]

Gen 26:19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

Gen 26:20 And the herdman of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours; and he called the name of the well Esek [**“contention”**]; because they strove with him.

Gen 26:21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also; and he called the name of it Sitnah [**“strife”**].

Gen 26:22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not; and he called the name of it Rehoboth [**“wide places or streets”**]; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

Gen 26:23 And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba. [**The place where Abraham lived until his death.**]

Gen 26:24 And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father; fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

[Isaac had the same relationship with the Lord that Abraham did.]

Gen 26:25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

[An altar was often built or a well dug to commemorate an event, such as making or renewing a covenant, whether between man and God and between men.]

Gen 26:26 Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.

Gen 26:27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

Gen 26:28 And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee; and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;

Gen 26:29 That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace; thou art now the blessed of the Lord.

Gen 26:30 And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

Gen 26:31 And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

Gen 26:32 And it came to pass the same day, That Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.

Gen 26:33 And he called it Sheba [**“seven” or “oath” A word in the Hebrew language may have several different meanings. Think about the connection between these two words.**]; therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba [**“well of the oath”**] unto this day.

[I thought Abraham had already dug the well and built the city. According to the Hebrew Bible, Abraham's well was seized by Abimelech's men (Genesis 21:25 KJV), and Isaac's servants also dug a well at Beersheba (Genesis 26:25 KJV). Though the exact origin of the name is disputed, according to the Bible the city gained its moniker as a result of the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac digging seven wells in the area, after having sworn two separate oaths there with the Philistine King Abimelech. The Bible was constructed by combining separate records. Perhaps the reason for the conflict is there were two or more separate records and two or more separate accounts. According to the Bible Abraham and Isaac dug seven wells in the area.]

Gen 26:34 And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite;

Gen 26:35 Which was a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

[Why would this grieve Isaac and Rebekah? He married two women. This could be a good argument that polygamy was not approved of by the Patriarchs. But the main reason was that these women came from the surrounding area, and were not from the same lineage as Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Rebekah, thus diluting the blood of Israel.]

CHAPTER 27

Jacob by stratagem obtaineth the blessing.

Gen 27:1 And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son; and he said unto him, Behold, here am I.

Gen 27:2 And he said, Behold, now, I am old, I know not the day of my death;

Gen 27:3 Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison;

Gen 27:4 And make me savory meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

[Isaac was about to die, so he wanted his favorite son to make his favorite meal. Both Jacob and Esau were trained in the culinary arts.]

Gen 27:5 And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it.

Gen 27:6 And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

Gen 27:7 Bring me venison, and make me savory meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the Lord before my death.

Gen 27:8 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee.

[We often overlook the determining and choosing role of women in the Bible. This is based on their wisdom and ability to discern.]

Gen 27:9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savory meat for thy father, such as he loveth;

Gen 27:10 And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.

Gen 27:11 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man;

Gen 27:12 My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

Gen 27:13 And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son; only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.

[Remarkable that Rebekah was willing to take full responsibility for fooling her headstrong husband in order to get him to do the right thing.]

Gen 27:14 And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother; and his mother made savory meat, such as his father loved.

Gen 27:15 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son;

Gen 27:16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck;

Gen 27:17 And she gave the savory meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

Gen 27:18 And he came unto his father, and said, My father; and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son?

[Isaac's eyesight has gone bad with age, so Jacob was able to pull one over on his dad.]

Gen 27:19 And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me; arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

Gen 27:20 And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought it to me.

[Isaac was suspicious that Jacob was able to produce the meat so quickly. Jacob said it was the Lord's doing. Yes, but only indirectly. But Isaac knew that Esau had married out of their lineage, but Jacob was unmarried, so maybe a bad marriage was preferable to no marriage.]

Gen 27:21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

[Isaac devised all kind of tests to prove to himself that it was Esau and not Jacob.]

Gen 27:22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

Gen 27:23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

Gen 27:24 And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.

Gen 27:25 And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat; and he brought him wine, and he drank.

[Isaac was willing to bless Jacob, thinking it was Esau. He recognized Jacob's voice. Did Isaac really know that it was Jacob?]

Gen 27:26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

[This was neither unusual nor unexpected for a father to kiss his son.]

Gen 27:27 And he came near, and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed;

[This is the first recorded kiss in the Bible. It is between two men: a father and a son. This was the lead-in to Jacob receiving his Patriarchal Blessing.]

Gen 27:28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine;

Gen 27:29 Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee; cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Gen 27:30 And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

[The beautiful blessing is over when Esau shows up with the savory meat.]

Gen 27:31 And he also had made savory meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

Gen 27:32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn, Esau.

[Esau acknowledges who he is, and Isaac is disturbed because he gave the blessing to the "wrong" son. But Rebecca knew.]

Gen 27:33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

[Isaac said what he knew: whoever he blessed would be blessed.]

Gen 27:34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

Gen 27:35 And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing.

[Can you really take a blessing away from somebody else? If this were wrong, the Lord would surely have intervened in some manner. He is not about to let all his plans for Israel get derailed.]

Gen 27:36 And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted **[The name Jacob means “supplanter”.]** me these two times; he took away my **birthright**; and, behold, now he hath taken away my **blessing**. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

Gen 27:37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him; and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

Gen 27:38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

[Esau wanted a blessing, too, and wept because he couldn't obtain the desired blessing.]

Gen 27:39 And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

Gen 27:40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

Gen 27:41 And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him; and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.

[Esau was unhappy with his secondary blessing and vowed to kill Jacob. Sounds like a repeat of Cain and Abel, with a minor twist.]

Gen 27:42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah; and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.

Gen 27:43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother, to Haran;

[Rebekah warns Jacob to flee for his life. Did she know this would happen?]

Gen 27:44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

[Lay low from my brother until this blows over.]

Gen 27:45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him; then I will send, and fetch thee from thence; why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

Gen 27:46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

[Rebekah was concerned that Jacob would also marry out of the family, but staying with Laban, his uncle, and Rebekah's brother would improve his chances of finding a suitable wife and perpetuating their lineage.]

CHAPTER 28

Isaac blesseth Jacob -- Esau marrieth Mahalath -- The vision of Jacob's ladder -- The stone of Beth-el -- Jacob's vow.

Gen 28:1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

[Isaac was finally resigned to the fact that God had chosen Jacob, so he finally gives him a real blessing and changes him not to take a wife outside his lineage. This was critically important back then, but today, Israel (meaning those who made covenants with the Lord in pre-mortality) are scattered throughout the world. There are few pure Israelites. I have met one person whom the Spirit told me was a pure Ephraimite. Later, he told me that he was related to nearly all the presidents of the Church, several presidents of the United States, and the crowned heart of Europe.]

Gen 28:2 Arise, go to Padan-aram [**"field", a plain or table land in Northern Mesopotamia in Aram, a region of Syria,**], to the house of Bethuel [**"God destroys" or "man of God" or "dweller in God"**] thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

[Go see your Uncle Laban and find a suitable cousin to marry.]

Gen 28:3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

Gen 28:4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.

[Was the previous blessing given by Isaac to Jacob, but given under false pretenses, a valid blessing? Esau believed it was, but most of us today would say "no". So, Isaac gave Jacob a real blessing. Remember, these men were Patriarchs, and while they may not have held the full Sealing Power, each were promised that whosoever they blessed would be blessed, and whosoever they cursed would be cursed. Abraham was blessed by Melchizedek and the Lord. Isaac, Jacob, Joseph were each blessed by their respective fathers, and by the Lord.]

Gen 28:5 And Isaac sent away Jacob; and he went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

Gen 28:6 When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;

Gen 28:7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;

Gen 28:8 And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;

Gen 28:9 Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath [**"stringed instrument"**] the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth [**"heights"**], to be his wife.

[Esau still wanted a blessing and an inheritance, so he figured he would get back into Isaac's good graces by marrying a daughter who was a descendant of Abraham, by his son Ishmael. I don't mean to disparage these people, but this was not the optimal choice.]

Gen 28:10 And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.

Gen 28:11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

Gen 28:12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder **[He saw a conduit, a highway, a pillar of fire, a portal.]** set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending upon it.

Gen 28:13 And, behold, the Lord **[Jehovah]** stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God **[Jehovah Elohim]** of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

Gen 28:14 **And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.**

Gen 28:15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

[The Lord stood at the top of the pillar of fire. He didn't descend, but Jacob could see Him standing at the top of the ladder. He repeated the blessing and covenant given to Abraham and Isaac. His seed would be scattered over the whole earth, but would again be gathered to this land, and through his seed, all the nations of the earth would be blessed.]

Gen 28:16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

Gen 28:17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful **[astonishing, full of awe, sacred]** is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

Gen 28:18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

Gen 28:19 And he called the name of that place Beth-el **[house of God]**; but the name of that city was called Luz **["almond tree", The almond tree is a symbol of the resurrection because it is the first tree to flower in the spring, and is an early sign that spring is on the way. For this reason, the Hebrew word for almond *shakeid* comes from a root that means "to watch" or "to be awake".]** at the first.

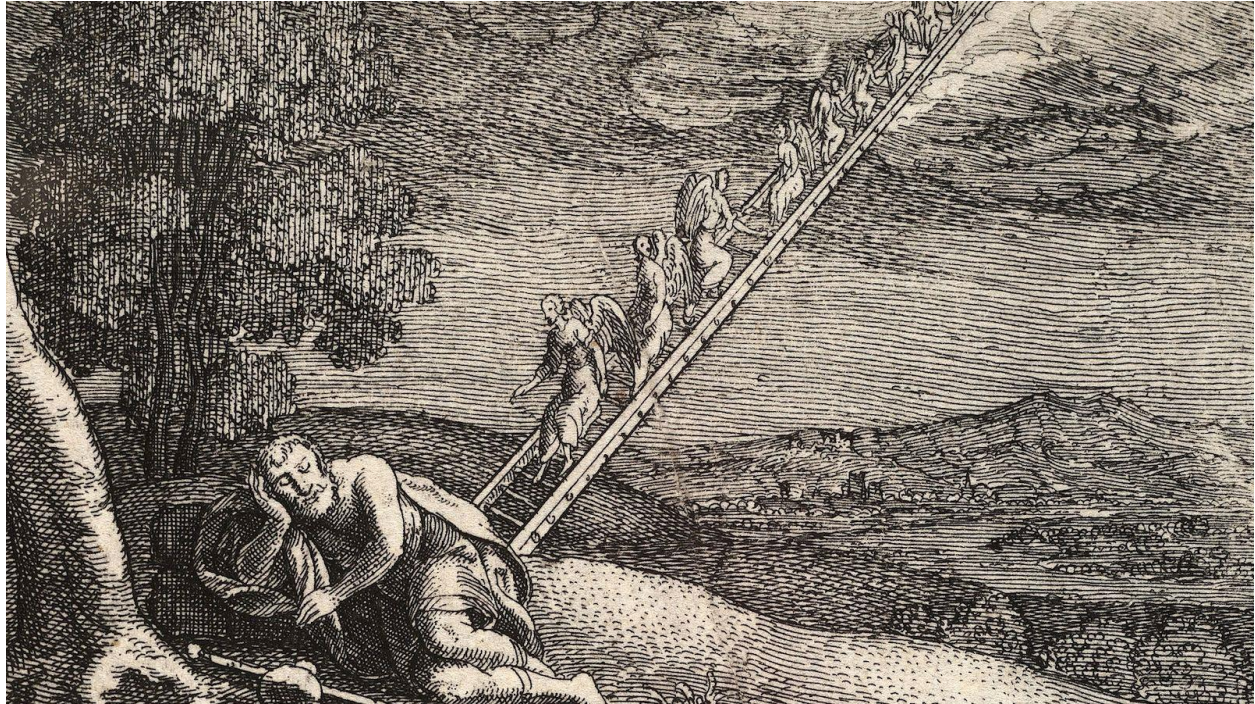
Gen 28:20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

Gen 28:21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God;

Gen 28:22 And the place of this stone which I have set for a pillar **[memorial stone, A stone is a symbol of a covenant. Altars were made of stones. The Hebrew word for stone is *Eben* or ABN. The word is a combination of AB (father) and BEN (son). In every covenant, there is the role of the father and the role of the son. Think about the symbolism of sleeping on a stone, dreaming about the covenant, the temple of Jerusalem where Christ said there would not be one stone piled on another, Jesus Christ the chief corner stone, building the temple of god and sealing the stones together. Much food for**

thought. It's better when you connect the dots for yourself.], shall be the place of God's house; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

[Jacob made a covenant with the Lord, in return. The surest way to obtain a blessing from the Lord is to covenant with Him. Go ask Him what type of covenant He would have you make with Him.]



CHAPTER 29

Jacob cometh to Haran -- Jacob covenanteth for Rachel -- He is deceived with Leah -- He marrieth Rachel.

Gen 29:1 Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east.

Gen 29:2 And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks; and a great stone was upon the well's mouth.

Gen 29:3 And thither were all the flocks gathered; and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place.

Gen 29:4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, from whence are ye? And they said, From Haran.

Gen 29:5 And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him.

Gen 29:6 And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well; and, behold, Rachel, his daughter cometh with the sheep.

Gen 29:7 And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together; water ye the sheep, and go and feed them.

Gen 29:8 And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

Gen 29:9 And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she kept them.

[So, Jacob arrives at his destination and sees some shepherds out in the pasture, and who should walk up and join them, but Rachel, leading Label's sheep. Is this usual for a woman to be doing this?]

Gen 29:10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

[Jacob rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well so Laban's sheep could find drink.]

Gen 29:11 And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

[I think Jacob was happy to see her.]

Gen 29:12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father.

[Jacob announced who he was. Like his father before him, he came seeking a wife of the family lineage.]

Gen 29:13 And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things.

Gen 29:14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month.

Gen 29:15 And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for naught? tell me, what shall thy wages be?

[Laban came out to meet Jacob, asked him to stay awhile, and offers to pay him for his work.]

Gen 29:16 And Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

Gen 29:17 Leah **["weary"]** was tender-eyed **[had soft eyes]**; but Rachel **["ewe"]** was beautiful and well-favored.

Gen 29:18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

[Jacob would work for 7 years, and his payment would be Rachel.]

Gen 29:19 And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man; abide with me.

[Laban: "Better you than somebody else." Doesn't sound too excited.]

Gen 29:20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.

[This is beautiful. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all come with beautiful love stories, and outstanding wives. We must not forget, they were part of all this, too.]

Gen 29:21 And Jacob said unto Laban, Give unto me my wife, that I may go and take her, for my days of serving thee are fulfilled.

[Time to pay up.]

Gen 29:22 And Laban gave her to Jacob, and gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

Gen 29:23 And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to Jacob, and she went in and slept with him.

Gen 29:24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah, Zilpah, his handmaid, to be a handmaid for her.

[It was customary for men and women to eat separately, so Jacob never got to see his bride until the morning after.]

Gen 29:25 And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah; and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?

[Too late! Laban pulled a fast one, but we must remember Jacob also deceived his father, so what goes around comes around.]

Gen 29:26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.

[The oldest daughter must be married first.]

Gen 29:27 Fulfill her week **[Continue the festival week with Leah. To forsake her now would be an insult.]**, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. **[Then work another seven years, and you get Rachel.]**

Gen 29:28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week; and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

Gen 29:29 And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, Bilhah, his handmaid, to be her maid.

[So, Laban finally kept his promise. Jacob had to wait 14 years to finally get Rachel.]

Gen 29:30 And he went in also and slept with Rachel, and he loved Rachel also, more than Leah, and served with Laban yet seven other years.

[Jacob got Leah, and her handmaid, Zilpah ["a trickling"], and Rachel and her handmail Bilhah ["troubled"].]

Gen 29:31 And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.

[Again, we have the barren wife problem. It must have run in that family.]

Gen 29:32 And Leah conceived, and bare a son; and she called his name Reuben [**“behold, a son”**]; for she said, Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.

Gen 29:33 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the Lord hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also; and she called his name Simeon [**“heard”**].

Gen 29:34 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have borne him three sons; therefore was his name called Levi [**“joined to”**].

Gen 29:35 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she said, Now will I praise the Lord; therefore she called his name **Judah** [**“praised”**]; and left bearing.

CHAPTER 30

Rachel giveth her maid unto Jacob -- Leah giveth her maid -- Rachel beareth Joseph -- Jacob's policy.

Gen 30:1 And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die.

Gen 30:2 And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?

[I have seen couples like this, who unable to conceive, and didn't know if it was the father or the mother. I also know of a couple where the husband divorced the wife because she had only girls, and he wanted a boy. Science tells us it is the male who determines the sex of the child, not the female. But, in this case, Jacob had many children by Leah, so the issue was with Rachel.]

Gen 30:3 And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in and lie with her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her.

Gen 30:4 And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife; and Jacob went and lay with her.

Gen 30:5 And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son.

[Can you picture this? If not, I won't describe it, but it was to somehow give the illusion of Rachel giving birth, even though it was Bilhah.]

Gen 30:6 And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son; therefore called she his name Dan [**“a judge”**].

Gen 30:7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son.

Gen 30:8 And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed; and she called his name Naphtali [**“wrestling”**].

Gen 30:9 When Leah saw that she had left bearing [**menopause?**], she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her unto Jacob to wife.

Gen 30:10 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son.

Gen 30:11 And Leah said, A troop cometh; and she called his name Gad [**“troop”**].

Gen 30:12 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son.

Gen 30:13 And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed; and she called his name Asher [**“happy”, My first great-grandson was born last year. He spent two months in the preemie ward, but now he is out, and he lives up to his name “Asher”, a very happy baby**].

Gen 30:14 And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes [**an herb used to make medicine, and is believed to increase sexual interest**] in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.

[If anybody needed help in the bedroom, Rachel did.]

Gen 30:15 And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee tonight for thy son's mandrakes.

[A good reason why polygamy doesn't work: the wives get jealous of each other.]

Gen 30:16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in and lie with me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.

Gen 30:17 And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son.

Gen 30:18 And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband; and she called his name Issachar [**“there is recompense”, Was Leah looking for payback?**].

[Apparently the mandrakes worked because Leah, who was done bearing children, conceived and bore another son.]

Gen 30:19 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son.

Gen 30:20 And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me [**Jacob probably dwelt with Rachel, because he really loved her. But, in large polygamous Mormon marriages, it was rare for the husband to come around and spend time with all his wives and children.**], because I have borne him six sons; and she called his name Zebulun [**“exalted”**].

Gen 30:21 And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah [**“judgment”, a word related to Dan, which means “judge”**].

Gen 30:22 And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

Gen 30:23 And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach;

Gen 30:24 And she called his name Joseph [**“Jehovah has added”**]; and said, The Lord shall add to me another son [**She prophesied.**].

Gen 30:25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country.

[Having achieved his goal with Laban, Jacob was ready to pack up and move back to the land God has promised him and his fathers.]

Gen 30:26 Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go; for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.

[He wanted his wives and children to come along, and also to be paid for his work.]

Gen 30:27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favor in thine eyes, tarry; for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.

[Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, despite their trials were highly favored of the Lord, and other people noticed it as well.]

Gen 30:28 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.

[Laban said “Name your price, and I will pay it.”]

Gen 30:29 And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee and how thy cattle was with me.

Gen 30:30 For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming; and now, when shall I provide for mine own house also?

Gen 30:31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me anything; if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock.

[Jacob was setting Laban up to cut a deal by reminding him of how he prospered Laban, and how he needed to take care of his own house.]

Gen 30:32 I will pass through all thy flock today, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and of such shall be my hire.

Gen 30:33 So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face; every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me.

Gen 30:34 And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.

[It is evident from the text and Laban’s reaction that this proposal appeared to be lopsided in favor of Laban: most likely the majority of Laban’s flocks were pure white sheep and pure white or black goats, with very few spotted, speckled, or striped animals. Since the majority of Laban’s flocks had solid coat colors, he figured that his flocks would continue to breed true to their solid color coats. After removing Jacob’s small flock (which he had his sons keep from Jacob), he believed they could not, therefore, influence his own remaining flock by breeding with them. To Laban, it looked like Jacob would leave with at best a few mottled, striped, and streaked sheep and maybe goats, while he would continue to gain flocks and pay extremely cheap labor rates for their care.]

Gen 30:35 And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstreaked and spotted, and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted, and every one that had some white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons.

[You may wonder, as I did, whether spotted animals were considered blemished for purposes of sacrifice, but the Hebrew word for “without blemish” is *tamiym*, meaning whole, complete, or sound. It’s related to the Hebrew word *tam*, incorrectly translated as “perfect”.]

Gen 30:36 And he [Laban] set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob [They separated the herds and flocks so they wouldn't interbreed.]; and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

Gen 30:37 And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled [peeled the bark] white streaks in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods.

Gen 30:38 And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink.

Gen 30:39 And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstreaked, speckled, and spotted.

Gen 30:40 And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstreaked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle.

[Apparently, branches with the bark peeled off of them gave off some kind of smell that induced the animals to breed. Also, when the animals were drinking, he placed the calves and the kids in front of the mothers, so their attention was on the young, while the males came up behind the females and impregnated them. Jacob kept the flocks and herds separate so they wouldn't interbreed.]

Gen 30:41 And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

Gen 30:42 But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in; so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

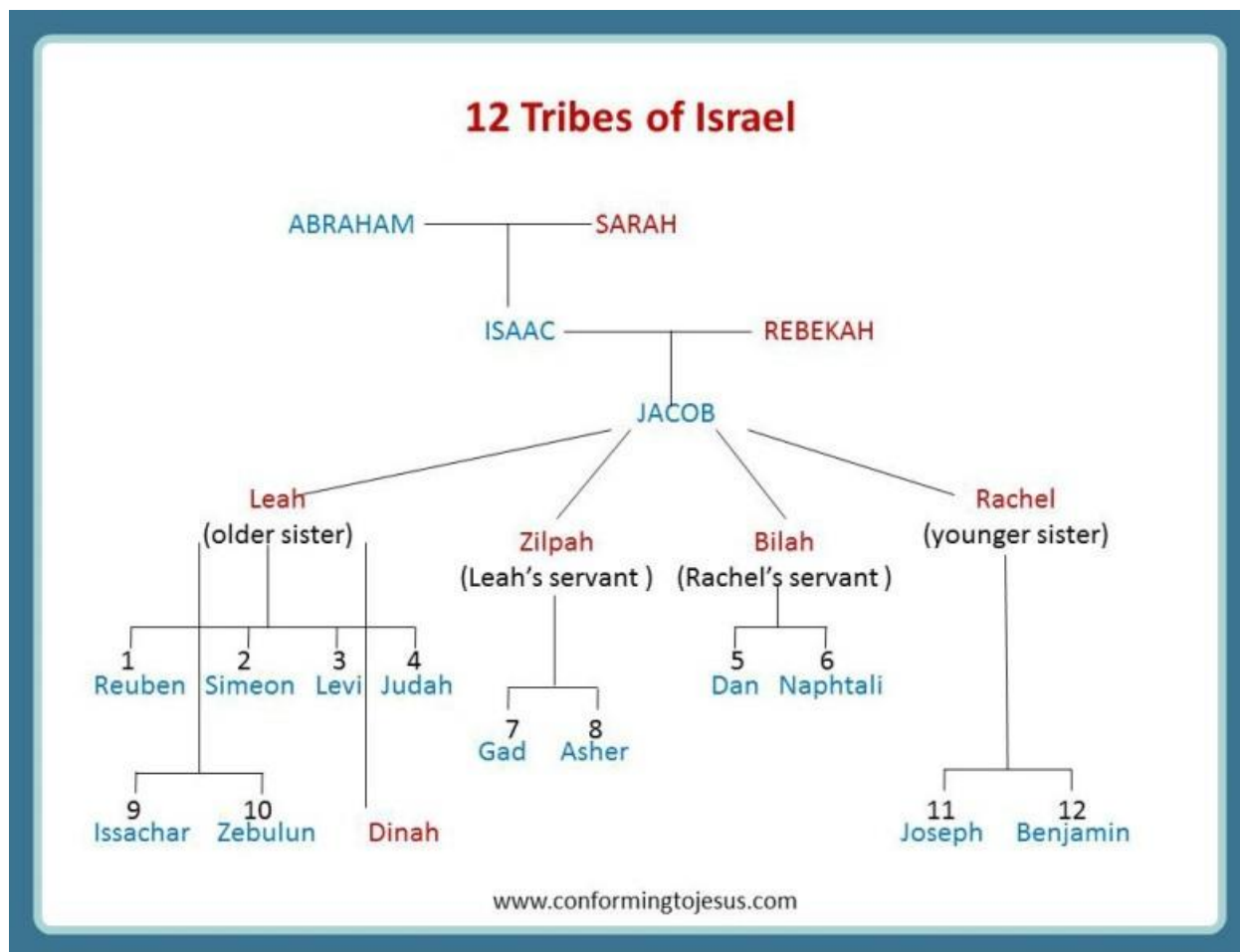
[Jacob only did this with his cattle and with the stronger cattle, so as to increase his own holdings.]

Gen 30:43 And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.

[If you are still confused, this website does a pretty good job of explaining this. It was a combination of knowledge of the animals' breeding patterns, genetics, and inspiration from God.

<https://answersingenesis.org/genetics/animal-genetics/jacobs-odd-breeding-program-genesis-30/> }

Here is a chart of Jacob's children, by all his wives and concubines.



CHAPTER 31

Jacob departeth secretly -- Laban pursueth him -- The covenant at Galeed.

Gen 31:1 And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.

Gen 31:2 And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before.

[Laban was finally getting wise to the plan, and no longer favored Jacob, as before.]

Gen 31:3 And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.

[The Lord told Jacob it was time to leave.]

Gen 31:4 And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock,

Gen 31:5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me.

Gen 31:6 And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.

Gen 31:7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.

[Jacob explained to his wives what had been happening.]

Gen 31:8 If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled; and it he said thus, The ringstreaked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstreaked.

Gen 31:9 Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.

Gen 31:10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstreaked, speckled, and grizzled.

Gen 31:11 And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob; and I said, Here am I.

Gen 31:12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstreaked, speckled, and grizzled; for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

[Apparently, God explained all of this to him in a dream.]

Gen 31:13 I am the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me; now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

[God reminded Jacob of their covenant at Beth-el, and told him it was time to return to his own land.]

Gen 31:14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

Gen 31:15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

Gen 31:16 For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's; now then whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

[His wives considered Jacobs gains to be for their benefit, since they would receive nothing else from Laban.]

Gen 31:17 Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;

Gen 31:18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

[“Head ‘em up and move ‘em out.”]

Gen 31:19 And Laban went to shear his sheep; and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's.

Gen 31:20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

[While Laban was out shearing his sheep, Rachel stole Laban’s idols, and they all left in secret.]

Gen 31:21 So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead **[A rocky region, east of the Jordan River, now located in present-day Jordan.]**

Gen 31:22 And it was told Laban on the third day, that Jacob had fled.

[Laban was not very observant. Jacob was running his secret breeding program for years, and they left with all his wives, children, servants, and cattle right under Laban's nose. And Laban didn't find out about it for three days. And they took his idols, too. Why didn't Laban notice any of this?]

Gen 31:23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

Gen 31:24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

Gen 31:25 Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount; and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

[Laban finally caught up with Jacob in the Gilead area.]

Gen 31:26 And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword?

[Laban was warned in a dream not to speak good or evil of Jacob, yet he accused Jacob of taking away his daughters, as if they were captives. Which was untrue, but he had to build up a phony case against Jacob to justify his actions. There was deception going on with both sides, as there usually is in a dispute, but Laban should have been a good steward over his own property all this time, and not allowed this to happen, or at least been aware of it.]

Gen 31:27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?

Gen 31:28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing.

[Why did you sneak away without me sending you off with a farewell party and without letting me say good-bye to my daughters and grand-children? This surely was a breach of social etiquette.]

Gen 31:29 It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt; but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

[This seems like empty threats coming from Laban: I could hurt you, but the Lord told me not to. If a man is having dreams from God, and obeying them, and if he knows that God is blessing Jacob and his family, why is he keeping idols?]

Gen 31:30 And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods? **[The word used here is Elohim, the same word used to refer to God. The word *Elohim* also means "rulers" or "judges".]**

[Laban had a right to be angry about the theft of his idols, but the question remains: if he believed in God, why would he also keep idols?]

Gen 31:31 And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid; for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.

Gen 31:32 With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live; before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

[Did Jacob really believe Laban would not let Jacob take his daughters? In those days, women were considered property.]

Gen 31:33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent.

[Laban searched for the idol himself. This was OK with Jacob. He did not want to take that which legitimately was not his.]

Gen 31:34 Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture **[what we would call a saddle bag]**, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not.

Gen 31:35 And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.

[Rachel lied to her father. She had the images all the time. Why did she take them? They were of no use to her?]

Gen 31:36 And Jacob was wroth, and chode **[contended, Past tense of *chide*?]** with Laban; and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?

Gen 31:37 Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

Gen 31:38 This **twenty years** have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young **[miscarried]**, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

Gen 31:39 That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.

Gen 31:40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

Gen 31:41 Thus have I been **twenty years** in thy house; I served thee **fourteen years for thy two daughters**, and **six years for thy cattle**; and thou hast **changed my wages ten times**.

[Now, it all comes out. Jacob recounts his honesty in dealing with Laban and his fears that Laban has been dealing dishonestly with him, and that he would depart with nothing.]

Gen 31:42 Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

Gen 31:43 And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine; and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have borne?

[Laban thinks this is all his and would take it. Jacob is probably right.]

Gen 31:44 Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.

Gen 31:45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.

Gen 31:46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made a heap; and they did eat there upon the heap.

[We talked about this. Building an altar of witness, piling stones on gather top of the others, and giving it a name.]

Gen 31:47 And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha **[Aramaic for “witness heap”]**; but Jacob called it Galeed. **[Hebrew for “witness heap”]**

Gen 31:48 And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed,

Gen 31:49 And Mizpah **[“watchtower”]**; for he said, The Lord watch between **[look out for]** me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

Gen 31:50 It thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.

Gen 31:51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

Gen 31:52 This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

Gen 31:53 The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor **[Abraham’s grandfather]**, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the fear **[respect, memory]** of his father Isaac.

Gen 31:54 Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread; and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

[Offer sacrifice and eat a meal together in remembrance of a covenant.]

Gen 31:55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them; and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.

CHAPTER 32

Jacob's vision -- He sendeth a present to Esau -- He wrestleth with an angel at Peniel -- He is called Israel.

Gen 32:1 And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

Gen 32:2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host; and he called the name of that place Mahanaim [**"two camps", We'll soon see why.**].

Gen 32:3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

[The descendants of Esau settled in Edom. Jacob and Esau didn't part in the best of company. Jacob was taking no chances on protecting his family.]

Gen 32:4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now;

Gen 32:5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

Gen 32:6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

[Jacob sent a message to Esau, who returned word that he was coming to meet Jacob with 400 men. Jacob sensed trouble.]

Gen 32:7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into **two bands**;

Gen 32:8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

Gen 32:9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee;

Gen 32:10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

Gen 32:11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mothers with the children.

Gen 32:12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

[Jacob prayed to God for deliverance. He gained leverage in his prayer by reminding God of His promises to him and his seed. This is a good practice for our prayers: remind God of His promises and covenants.]

Gen 32:13 And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother;

Gen 32:14 Two hundred she goats and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams,

Gen 32:15 Thirty milch [**nursing**] camels with their colts, forty kine [**heifers**] and ten bulls, twenty she asses and ten foals.

Gen 32:16 And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

Gen 32:17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee?

Gen 32:18 And thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau; and, behold, also he is behind us.

Gen 32:19 And so commanded he the second and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

Gen 32:20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.

[Jacob prepared a present for Esau, in order to appease him.]

Gen 32:21 So went the present over before him; and himself lodged that night in the company.

Gen 32:22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok **[“emptying”, A stream which intersects the mountain range of Gilead, and falls into the Jordan on the east about midway between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea].**

Gen 32:23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

Gen 32:24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

Gen 32:25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

Gen 32:26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

Gen 32:27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

Gen 32:28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel **[“god prevails”. Israel also means “Go to God.” Or “Go directly to God.”]**; for as a prince hast thou power **[“sarah”, one who contends, one who has power, one who persists]** with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

[I am going to include a passage from another book with a greater description of this event and its significance. See “Crawling into the Light”.]

Gen 32:29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

Gen 32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel **[“facing God”, or “to turn toward God and face him”]**; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

Gen 32:31 And as he passed over Penuel **[alternative spelling of Peniel]** the sun rose upon him, and he halted **[limped]** upon his thigh.

Gen 32:32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day; because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

CHAPTER 33

The kindness of Jacob and Esau at their meeting -- Jacob buildeth an altar called El-Elohe-Israel.

Gen 33:1 And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

Gen 33:2 And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

[He arranged his family of order of preference: least up front, greatest in the rear.]

Gen 33:3 And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

Gen 33:4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him; and they wept.

[Jacob bowed seven times, then Esau greeted him warmly.]

Gen 33:5 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children, and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

Gen 33:6 Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

Gen 33:7 And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves; and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

Gen 33:8 And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

Gen 33:9 And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.

[Jacob offered of his flocks and herds to Esau, but Esau wouldn't take then, initially.]

Gen 33:10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand; for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

Gen 33:11 Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.

[Jacob introduced his wives and children, and offered Esau flocks and herds. At first Esau refused them, but eventually he accepted.]

Gen 33:12 And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

Gen 33:13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me; and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.

Gen 33:14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant; and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir **[the home of Esau]**.

[Esau was to return quickly to his home, while Jacob followed more slowly on account of his young children.]

Gen 33:15 And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord.

[Esau left some of his servants behind with Jacob to assist.]

Gen 33:16 So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

Gen 33:17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth **[“booths”, small outdoor shelters]**, and built him a house, and made booths for his cattle; therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

Gen 33:18 And Jacob came to Shalem *[salem, or “peace”]*, a city of Shechem **[“back or “shoulder” or “ridge” a city in Manasseh; located in a valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, 34 miles (54 km) north of Jerusalem and 7 miles (10.5 km) south-east of Samaria]**, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram **[home of Laban]**; and pitched his tent before the city.

Gen 33:19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor **[“he-ass”, the prince of the city of Shechem]**, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money.

Gen 33:20 And he erected there an altar, and called it El-Elohe-Israel **[“The mighty God of Israel.”]**

CHAPTER 34

Dinah is ravished by Shechem -- Circumcision of the Shechemites -- The sons of Jacob slay them, and spoil their city -- Jacob reproveth Simeon and Levi.

Gen 34:1 And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

[After being around so many men, Dinah probably wanted to meet a few women.]

Gen 34:2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her.

[This is the most prominent man of the community sexually molesting the only daughter of Jacob.]

Gen 34:3 And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

Gen 34:4 And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife.

[Rape her, then marry her.]

Gen 34:5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; now his sons were with his cattle in the field; and Jacob held his peace until they were come.

Gen 34:6 And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him.

[The prince of the city and father of the rapist wanted to have a talk with Jacob.]

Gen 34:7 And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done.

Gen 34:8 And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter; I pray you give her him to wife.

Gen 34:9 And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.

Gen 34:10 And ye shall dwell with us; and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein.

Gen 34:11 And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

Gen 34:12 Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me; but give me the damsel to wife.

Gen 34:13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father **deceitfully**, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister;

[Hamor wanted the families to intermarry and to keep good relations. But Jacob's sons were angry.]

Gen 34:14 And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us;

[Jacob's sons agreed, as long as their men were circumcised. They had something else in mind.]

Gen 34:15 But in this will we consent unto you; If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised;

Gen 34:16 Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

Gen 34:17 But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

Gen 34:18 And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem Hamor's son.

[Hamor and Shechem agreed.]

Gen 34:19 And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter; and he was more honorable than all the house of his father.

Gen 34:20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying,

Gen 34:21 These men are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, it is large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters.

Gen 34:22 Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised.

Gen 34:23 Shall not their cattle and their substance and every beast of theirs be ours? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.

[They persuaded all the men of the community to get circumcised. But they had plans of their own.]

Gen 34:24 And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.

Gen 34:25 And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi **[both sons of Leah]**, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.

[After the men got circumcised and were still sore. (It is a very painful operation for an adult male, even if done in a modern hospital.)]

Gen 34:26 And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

[Simeon and Levi killed all the males of the city, including Hamor and his son Shecham.]

Gen 34:27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister.

Gen 34:28 They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field,

[They But took everything from the city, and all the livestock.]

Gen 34:29 And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.

[And, took their wives captive.]

Gen 34:30 And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.

Gen 34:31 And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with a harlot?

[Jacob knew this was not a great way to ingratiate themselves into the community. His sons had set up a pattern of continual violence and killing.]

CHAPTER 35

God sendeth Jacob to Beth-el -- He purgeth his house of idols -- He buildeth an altar at Beth-el -- God blesseth Jacob at Beth-el -- Rachel dieth -- Reuben lieth with Bilhah -- The sons of Jacob -- Jacob cometh to Isaac at Hebron -- The death of Isaac.

Gen 35:1 And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.

[Go back to the place where you wrestled with the angel.]

Gen 35:2 Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange **[foreign, alien]** gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments;

Gen 35:3 And let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.

Gen 35:4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.

[It sounds like he was preparing them to have an experience with God at the altar. But, what's with the idols? We know that Rachel stole her father's idols. Did she want them for herself? Did she simply want a keepsake to remind her of her father? Did she intend to break them or dispose of them, as Abraham had done? What about the rest of the household? Did they have their own idols, too?]

Gen 35:5 And they journeyed; and the terror **[fear]** of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

Gen 35:6 So Jacob came to Luz which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Beth-el, he and all the people that were with him.

Gen 35:7 And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el; because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.

[This is where God appeared to Jacob before. It says "angel" in some passages, but was really God.]

Gen 35:8 But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak; and the name of it was called Allonbachuth **["oak of weeping"]**.

Gen 35:9 And **God appeared unto Jacob again**, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him.

Gen 35:10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob; thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name; and he called his name Israel.

Gen 35:11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

Gen 35:12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

[God appears to Jacob, again at Beth-El. We tend to think that God only appeared to Moses, but God appeared to Jacob, at least twice, and probably to many other prophets and righteous individuals.]

God repeats the promise given unto his fathers. Since we are descendants of Israel, or adopted at such, and we become begotten sons and daughters of Christ at the baptism or fire, baptism of the Holy Ghost. Joseph Smith says that the Gospel of Abraham is the highest manifestation of Priesthood, yet experienced in the Church. And he said that in 1843. He said that if the saints finished the Nauvoo temple, God would fill it with power, and reveal more. This never happened. The mission of Elijah has yet to be fulfilled. Elijah was to reveal the Priesthood and tie the hearts of the fathers to the children, and plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers. How is this to be done? Here is a clue. The same promises given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were pronounced upon their heads by an earthly servant, having Patriarchal authority, but there were also placed upon their heads by God, himself, either by direct appearance, or by His voice out of the heavens. Do you suppose we each need to receive these same revelations in order to plant the promises in our hearts?]

Gen 35:13 And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.

Gen 35:14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.

Gen 35:15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el.

Gen 35:16 And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath; and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor.

[Rachel was pregnant with Jacob's second son from her.]

Gen 35:17 And it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also.

Gen 35:18 And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died,) that she called his name Ben-oni **["son of my sorrow"]**; but his father called him Benjamin **["son of my right hand"]**.

Gen 35:19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

[Tragically, Rachel died in childbirth. The love of Jacob's life was gone. She sacrificed her life bearing posterity for Israel: the man and the house.]

Gen 35:20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

Gen 35:21 And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar **[Migdal-Edar means "Tower of the Flock". Mary Magdalene means "Miriam, the high tower". Magdala is not a place.]**.

Gen 35:22 And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve;

[We are about to end a beautiful story, but Reuben has to go and mess it up by sleeping with Bilhah, his mother's maid, his half-brothers' mother, and his father's concubine.]

Gen 35:23 The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun;

Gen 35:24 The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin;

Gen 35:25 And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali;

Gen 35:26 And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher. These are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram.

[Recounting the sons of Jacob. See the chart that appears earlier in the book, at the end of Chapter 30.]

Gen 35:27 And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arba, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

[Jacob finally returned to see his father, Isaac, after an absence of over 20 years.]

Gen 35:28 And the days of Isaac were a hundred and fourscore years **[180]**.

Gen 35:29 And **Isaac gave up the ghost, and died**, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days; **and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him [in the same spot at Abraham and Sarah.]**

[I wanted to give a complete coverage of the life of Abraham, as well as the death of Isaac, and the visions of Jacob. There is much to be said about Joseph, Jacob's 11th son, and my personal favorite Old Testament character, but that's for another time. I will continue now with another account of Jacob's experience with the Lord. This was written by Robert Smith. He doesn't say, but I believe he saw this in vision. Then, I will get into the Book of Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price.]

Crawling into the light

Another description of Jacob's experience by Robert Smith. From: The Glory of God is Intelligence: Acquiring and Disseminating Light and Truth, by Robert Smith, <http://upwardthought.blogspot.com/>

Jacob was shown a ladder into heaven, with angels ascending and descending. But he understood that experience very differently after he later climbed the ladder himself. The process is *seen* from the outside as climbing a ladder, but *experienced* as crawling with your face on the ground.

In his youth, fleeing from his murderous brother, Jacob crossed the wilderness to spend twenty years as a stranger in a strange land. He lived in a foreign culture, serving under an unfair and dishonest man, dealing with the daily struggles of serving two capricious and inconsistent wives, many children, many servants, and a large cattle operation. This daily grind culminated in his return home.

His journey was intense. He was in charge of a sizable company of men, women, cattle, and small children. There would have been substantial work to do to care for the cattle and children along the way, making the long journey of several hundred miles even longer. The trip could have taken months. The whole time he was beset by anxiety over what Esau might do to him and his family once they reunited. Jacob "was greatly afraid and distressed" in fear of his brother, who he thought wanted to kill him (see Genesis 32:7).

Upon reaching the river, Jacob sent his company ahead in partitions. He was left alone at evening. Despite the arduous journey and the exhaustion that no doubt overwhelmed him, he spent the entire night in focused, intense prayer. At some point in the night, the Lord appeared to Jacob. Here is the Genesis account of Jacob's experience:

- 24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.
- 25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.
- 26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.
- 27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.
- 28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.
- 29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.
- 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.
- 31 And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.
- 32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank. (Genesis 32)

This account has been modified and degraded over time. Here is a more accurate account of what transpired.

Instead of appearing in a dream, where the physically impure body is protected from the glory of the Lord, Jacob physically saw the Lord in glory. Initially, the Lord appeared in an impulse of light and fire some distance from Jacob. It was so intense that it knocked Jacob to the ground with such force that it popped his leg bone out of his hip socket. As a witness to the force that hit him, this injury is most often seen today in intense car accidents.

The Lord dwells in everlasting burnings, and this self-contained, non-extinguishing ball of fire was at once violent, loud, peaceful and beautiful. The overwhelming nature of the light at first pinned Jacob on his face. The light from glory is not like the light we see in the celestial kingdom. It is not just a visual phenomenon. Even with the brightest celestial light, the only physical effect is warmth on the skin. Light from glory pierces your body thoroughly. It is an utterly intense experience that permeates your being. In extreme pain from both his hip and the reaction of his flesh to the glory of God, he struggled to breathe as he attempted to shield his face from the light. The scene went on for what seemed like an eternity: Jacob struggling to hold on, and the Lord patiently waiting in silence. As the light penetrated his shielding arm and his closed eyelids, the glory began to purify Jacob's flesh. The pain started to gradually ease as the glory of God burned out his impurities. As he persisted in God's glory, he became more and more sanctified and more and more comfortable in God's presence. Eventually, he was able to remove his arm, then open his eyes. At first, the light was too bright to see clearly into. Then, his eyes adjusted enough that he could make out the shape of a man.

Most men, knowing they were in the presence of God, would have long since recoiled and said, "it is enough Lord." Jacob was not like most men. Jacob was a man of great tenacity, physical strength, and courage. He mustered every ounce of strength left in his devastated frame, and he did the unthinkable. He inched his arms forward, and scraped his body forward along the rocky soil. He immediately collapsed from exhaustion. The Lord patiently waited. Recovering some fraction of strength, he repeated the process. His injured leg hung powerless by his side. He repeated the process again and again, each time using his last ounce of strength, then collapsing for some time, then pulling from some previously undiscovered reservoir of strength to inch forward again.

Eventually, he came within arm's length to the Lord. Still prostrate, exhausted beyond measure, he lurched up and grabbed the Lord's feet. Like a boxer at the end of the bout of his life, he clung tightly to the Lord, who permitted him to remain there for a great deal of time. Finally, the Lord spoke and announced that he must go. The Lord blessed Jacob for having wrestled with his glory all night and overcoming. Most men quit long before their prayer yields the presence of the Lord. Of those who don't, very few indeed would endure God's glory without pleading with the Lord to stop the experience. Jacob truly was exceptional, and yet he was not exceptional enough for the Lord to tell him his name, a special blessing reserved for a special few.

We may wonder why the account we have is so abbreviated and adulterated. The answer lies in the false traditions of the revisionists. They did not like the idea of a man coming face to face with God. It offended their traditions—traditions created to sooth the pride of those who dismissed the possibility of such a story being literal in order to settle the contradiction between their inflated self-image and lack of personal experience. Our pride can drive easy acceptance of what would otherwise be dismissed as patently absurd. Thankfully, they could only revise the story so much around the two fixed points

provided by the name of a physical place (Penuel means “face of God”) and the well-known tradition of Jacob's limp.

This is a literal story, but it is also archetypal in that it is the form of what every man of God experiences. Abraham crawled toward the Lord's glory throughout his life. He was born into an apostate family. He learned the value of God's word on his own. He left a life of luxury to become a nomad. Almost everyone around him—his father, his brother, his nephew, his wives, his children—failed to appreciate his sacrifice and failed to rise up to his level of love for the Lord. Every day of his life was a test to see if he would trust God in spite of great hardship. The scriptures are filled with similar situations.

Book of Abraham

This is the Book of Abraham from The Pearl of Great Price, together with my thoughts and comments. I am not including the Egyptian facsimilies, nor commenting on them. Rather than get lost in the controversies over translation and meaning of the facsimilies, I prefer to concentrate on the life of Abraham and his personal quest to find his connection to the Fathers, and obtain a relationship and covenant with the Lord. It is a natural follow-up to the Book of Moses. This is relevant to our day, as we seek to be like Abraham and obtain like blessings.

Abraham Chapter 1

Abr 1:1 In the land of the Chaldeans, at the residence of my fathers, I, Abraham, saw that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence;

[Abraham had gotten into trouble with the idol worshippers, and he needed to escape for his life. This portion of the Book of Abraham is cursory. This is why I included the other writings for background.]

Abr 1:2 And, finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers.

[Born in an apostate community, Abraham was still able to discover his birthright and who he was. One account says he found out from an uncle. Perhaps the Lord whispered to him. In any event, Abraham heard about Melchizedek, whom the Talmud tells us was Shem. Abraham studied for years under Melchizedek and Eber in the city of Salem.]

Abr 1:3 It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, on the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me.

Abr 1:4 I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed.

[Abraham received the Priesthood under the hand of Melchizedek.]

Abr 1:5 My **[immediate]** fathers having turned from their righteousness, and from the holy commandments which the Lord their God had given unto them, unto the worshiping of the gods of the heathen, utterly refused to hearken to my voice; **[Abraham came from a long line of righteous men who had turned to idolatry.]**

Abr 1:6 For their hearts were set to do evil, and were wholly turned to the god of Elkenah, and the god of Libnah, and the god of Mahmackrah, and the god of Korash, and the god of Pharaoh, king of Egypt;

Abr 1:7 Therefore they turned their hearts to the sacrifice of the heathen in offering up their **children** unto these dumb idols, and hearkened not unto my voice, but endeavored to take away my life by the hand of the priest of Elkenah. The priest of Elkenah was also the priest of Pharaoh.

[Abraham endeavored to preach to them and convert them to the one true God, but they refused to listen.]

Abr 1:8 Now, at this time it was the custom of the priest of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, to offer up upon the altar which was built in the land of Chaldea, for the offering unto these strange gods, **men, women, and children.**

Abr 1:9 And it came to pass that the priest made an offering unto the god of Pharaoh, and also unto the god of Shagreel, even after the manner of the Egyptians. Now the god of Shagreel was the sun.

Abr 1:10 Even the thank-offering of a **child** did the priest of Pharaoh offer upon the altar which stood by the hill called Potiphar's Hill, at the head of the plain of Olishem.

Abr 1:11 Now, this priest had offered upon this altar **three virgins** at one time, who were the daughters of Onitah, one of the royal descent directly from the loins of Ham. These virgins were offered up because of their virtue; they would not bow down to worship gods of wood or of stone, therefore they were killed upon this altar, and it was done after the manner of the Egyptians.

Abr 1:12 And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar; and that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the representation at the commencement of this record.

[The citizens of Ur offered up children and virgins and wanted to slay Abraham, as well.]

Abr 1:13 It was made after the form of a bedstead, such as was had among the Chaldeans, and it stood before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and also a god like unto that of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

Abr 1:14 That you may have an understanding of these gods, I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning, which manner of figures is called by the Chaldeans Rahleenos, which signifies hieroglyphics.

Abr 1:15 And as they lifted up their hands upon me, that they might offer me up and take away my life, behold, I lifted up my voice unto the Lord my God, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and he filled me with the vision of the Almighty, and the angel of his presence stood by me, and immediately unloosed my bands;

Abr 1:16 And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father's house, and from all thy kins-folk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of;

[Even upon the altar, Abraham had the composure to call out to God, and God answered him.]

Abr 1:17 And this because they have turned their hearts away from me, to worship the god of Elkenah, and the god of Libnah, and the god of Mahmackrah, and the god of Korash, and the god of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; therefore I have come down to visit them, and to destroy him who hath lifted up his hand against thee, Abraham, my son, to take away thy life.

Abr 1:18 Behold, I will lead thee by my hand, and **I will take thee, to put upon thee my name, even the Priesthood of thy father,** and my power shall be over thee.

[I searched the scriptures. Nowhere else do I find an instance where the Lord puts His Name upon a person. But this is what happens to each of us when we covenant in the Sacrament, our willingness to take upon us the Name of Christ (not the name “Christ”, but the name of Christ). Then the Lord places that Name upon us when we receive the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, and the Lord adopts us as His begotten sons and daughters.]

Abr 1:19 As it was with Noah so shall it be with thee; **but through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever**, for I am thy God.

[This is our link back to the line of Patriarchs before the flood. Abraham received the same blessing and ministry as Noah, and Noah received the same blessing and ministry as Enoch, and so on, back to Adam. Abraham and his seed were called to manifest the Name of Christ to the world. There are some very significant statements in this early part of Abraham, Chapter 1. Don’t skip over them.]

Abr 1:20 Behold, Potiphar's Hill was in the land of Ur, of Chaldea. And the Lord broke down the altar of Elkenah, and of the gods of the land, and utterly destroyed them, and smote the priest that he died; and there was great mourning in Chaldea, and also in the court of Pharaoh; which Pharaoh signifies king by royal blood.

Abr 1:21 Now this king of Egypt was a descendant from the loins of Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth.

Abr 1:22 From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land.

Abr 1:23 The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Egyptus, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden.

Abr 1:24 When this woman discovered the land it was under water, who afterward settled her sons in it; and thus, from Ham, sprang that race which preserved the curse in the land.

Abr 1:25 Now the first government of Egypt was established by Pharaoh, the eldest son of Egyptus, the daughter of Ham, and it was after the manner of the government of Ham, which was patriarchal.

Abr 1:26 Pharaoh, being a righteous man, established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, even in the reign of Adam, and also of Noah, his father, who blessed him with the blessings of the earth, and with the blessings of wisdom, but cursed him as pertaining to the Priesthood.

Abr 1:27 Now, Pharaoh being of that lineage by which he could not have the right of Priesthood, notwithstanding the Pharaohs would fain **[like to but couldn’t]** claim it from Noah, through Ham, therefore my father was led away by their idolatry;

Abr 1:28 **But I shall endeavor, hereafter, to delineate the chronology running back from myself to the beginning of the creation, for the records have come into my hands, which I hold unto this present time.**

[Abraham never does this in this record. It would be nice if he did.]

Abr 1:29 Now, after the priest of Elkenah was smitten that he died, there came a fulfilment of those things which were said unto me concerning the land of Chaldea, that there should be a famine in the land.

Abr 1:30 Accordingly a famine prevailed throughout all the land of Chaldea, and my father was sorely tormented because of the famine, and he repented of the evil which he had determined against me, to take away my life.

Abr 1:31 **But the records of the fathers, even the patriarchs, concerning the right of Priesthood, the Lord my God preserved in mine own hands; therefore a knowledge of the beginning of the creation, and also of the planets, and of the stars, as they were made known unto the fathers, have I kept even unto this day, and I shall endeavor to write some of these things upon this record, for the benefit of my posterity that shall come after me.**

[It seems the record of Abraham is incomplete. This volume does not contain the complete records of the fathers.]

Abraham Chapter 2

Abr 2:1 Now the Lord God caused the famine to wax sore in the land of Ur, insomuch that Haran, my brother, died; but Terah, my father, yet lived in the land of Ur, of the Chaldees.

Abr 2:2 And it came to pass that I, Abraham, took Sarai to wife, and Nehor, my brother, took Milcah to wife, who was the daughter of Haran.

Abr 2:3 Now the Lord had said unto me: Abraham, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.

[The Lord instructed Abraham, his father, his brother and their wives to leave Ur.]

Abr 2:4 Therefore I left the land of Ur, of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and I took Lot, my brother's son, and his wife, and Sarai my wife; and also my father followed after me, unto the land which we denominated Haran.

[But, they didn't head straight for Canaan. They travel by way of upper Mesopotamia.]

Abr 2:5 And the famine abated; and my father tarried in Haran and dwelt there, as there were many flocks in Haran; and my father turned again unto his idolatry, therefore he continued in Haran.

[Abraham's father and brother continued there, and Isaac and Jacob later came back to this region to seek wives who were descendants of Abraham's brother. This was a flat land with good pastures. This is where Jacob served Laban for over 20 years and built his fortune. This was also a land of idolatry. Abraham's father, brother, and the rest of their family persisted in idol worship. When Jacob left this land with his family, Rachel stole her father's idols, and before Jacob's family could enter Canaan and serve the Lord, they had to get rid of all their idols.]

Abr 2:6 But I, Abraham, and Lot, my brother's son, prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord appeared unto me, and said unto me: Arise, and take Lot with thee; for I have purposed to take thee away out of Haran, and to make of thee a **minister to bear my name** in a strange land which I will give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession, when they hearken to my voice.

Abr 2:7 For I am the Lord thy God; I dwell in heaven; the earth is my footstool; I stretch my hand over the sea, and it obeys my voice; I cause the wind and the fire to be my chariot; I say to the mountains--Depart hence--and behold, they are taken away by a whirlwind, in an instant, suddenly.

Abr 2:8 My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; therefore my hand shall be over thee.

Abr 2:9 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;

Abr 2:10 And I will bless them through thy name; **for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;**

[Abraham and Lot pray to the Lord, and He directs them to go to a new land, gives promises to Abraham concerning his posterity. This is the definition of the "Gospel of Abraham", or the Gospel which is called after Abraham. This was the preparatory Gospel given to the church after they rejected the fullness of the Gospel. It still includes the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, as described below, and which leads to the fullness of the Gospel.]

There are two Comforters spoken of. One is the Holy Ghost, the same as given on the day of Pentecost, and that all Saints receive after faith, repentance, and baptism. This first Comforter or Holy Ghost has no other effect than pure intelligence. It is more powerful in expanding the mind, enlightening the understanding, and storing the intellect with present knowledge, of a man who is of the literal seed of Abraham, than one that is a Gentile, though it may not have half as much visible effect upon the body; for as the Holy Ghost falls upon one of the literal seed 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 of the seed of Abraham. That man that has none of the blood of Abraham (naturally) must have a new creation by the Holy Ghost. In such a case, there may be more of a powerful effect upon the body, and visible to the eye, than upon as Israelite, while the Israelite at first might be far before the Gentile in pure intelligence. (DHC Volume 3, Chapter 25)]

Abr 2:11 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; **and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal [In this way, God places His name, and the name of Abraham upon us].**

Abr 2:12 Now, after the Lord had withdrawn from speaking to me, and withdrawn his face from me, I said in my heart: **Thy servant has sought thee earnestly; now I have found thee;**

[I love this sentence. May we all seek the Lord earnestly and find Him.]

Abr 2:13 Thou didst send thine angel to deliver me from the gods of Elkenah, and I will do well to hearken unto thy voice, therefore let thy servant rise up and depart in peace.

[Abraham determined in his heart to follow what the Lord told him.]

Abr 2:14 So I, Abraham, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me; and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran.

Abr 2:15 And I took Sarai, whom I took to wife when I was in Ur, in Chaldea, and Lot, my brother's son, and all our substance that we had gathered, and the souls that we had won in Haran, and came forth in the way to the land of Canaan, and dwelt in tents as we came on our way;

[Abraham was preaching the Gospel to the people in the area. The Book of Moses tells us that the ancient patriarchs were “preachers of righteousness”, and Abraham was no exception.]

AN EVANGELIST is a Patriarch, even the oldest man of the blood of Joseph or of the seed of Abraham. Wherever the Church of Christ is established in the earth, there should be a Patriarch for the benefit of the posterity of the Saints, as it was with Jacob in giving his patriarchal blessing unto his sons, etc. (DHC Volume 3, Chapter 25)]

Abr 2:16 Therefore, eternity was our covering and our rock and our salvation, as we journeyed from Haran by the way of Jershon, to come to the land of Canaan.

Abr 2:17 Now I, Abraham, built an altar in the land of Jershon, and made an offering unto the Lord, and prayed that the famine might be turned away from my father's house, that they might not perish.

Abr 2:18 And then we passed from Jershon through the land unto the place of Sechem; it was situated in the plains of Moreh, and we had already come into the borders of the land of the Canaanites, and I offered sacrifice there in the plains of Moreh, and called on the Lord devoutly, because we had already come into the land of this idolatrous nation.

[We don't know where Jershon is located. The name also appears in the Book of Mormon, and there the name refers to a “land of inheritance”].

Abr 2:19 And the Lord appeared unto me in answer to my prayers, and said unto me: Unto thy seed will I give this land.

Abr 2:20 And I, Abraham, arose from the place of the altar which I had built unto the Lord, and removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched my tent there, Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east; and there I built another altar unto the Lord, and called again upon the name of the Lord.

[Having arrived in the land of Canaan, the Lord confirmed to Abraham that “this is the place”. He built an altar and offered prayer, and dedicated to land to his posterity and to the Lord.]

Abr 2:21 And I, Abraham, journeyed, going on still towards the south; and there was a continuation of a famine in the land; and I, Abraham, concluded to go down into Egypt, to sojourn there, for the famine became very grievous.

Abr 2:22 And it came to pass when I was come near to enter into Egypt, the Lord said unto me: Behold, Sarai, thy wife, is a very fair woman to look upon;

Abr 2:23 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see her, they will say--She is his wife; and they will kill you, but they will save her alive; therefore see that ye do on this wise:

Abr 2:24 Let her say unto the Egyptians, she is thy sister, and thy soul shall live.

Abr 2:25 And it came to pass that I, Abraham, told Sarai, my wife, all that the Lord had said unto me-- Therefore say unto them, I pray thee, thou art my sister, that it may be well with me for thy sake, and my soul shall live because of thee.

[We explained this in the Genesis version. Sarah was Abraham's half-sister, so this was not a lie. What Abraham said was the truth, but not the whole truth. We see this ruse many times with both Abraham and Isaac. If a pharaoh or a king wanted Sarah, and she was introduced as Abraham's wife, the pharaoh or king would have to kill him to get to Sarah, but if they were simply brother and sister, it would not be necessary to kill Abraham to obtain Sarah. Such were the customs back then.]

Abraham Chapter 3

Abr 3:1 And I, Abraham, had the **Urim and Thummim**, which the Lord my God had given unto me, in Ur of the Chaldees;

[There are two sets of the Urim and Thummim that we are aware of from the scriptures. One set was given to the brother of Jared, and the other set was given to Abraham. The set that was given to the brother of Jared made its way to the New World, eventually buried with the gold plates, unearthed by Joseph Smith and used in the beginning to translate the Book of Mormon and to receive revelations. It is now said to be stored in the hill called Shim, along with the gold plates and many other ancient records. The set that Abraham used was passed down to Aaron and Moses, for use in the Old World, was had among the Jews and lost to history, probably during the Babylonian captivity. Someday both sets will come forth and be used by the end-times servants to translate ancient records.

What are the Urim and Thummim? Their first mention is in Exodus 28:30, where the Lord describes the priestly vestments which Aaron is to wear: "And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually."

They are two stones set in a breastplate. According to Joseph Smith, they were somehow arranged that a person could look through them like a pair of spectacles and receive revelation.

Their name literally means "lights" (Urim) and "perfections" (Thummim) in the Hebrew language. The "perfections" referred to were defined as "integrity", "wholeness", "completeness", not moral perfection.

If you have noticed, the Urim and Thummim were always used in an Aaronic Priesthood, or preparatory setting. Aaron used them to obtain the decisions of God. Moses communed directly with God on the mountain. Abraham used them in Ur, after first learning to receive revelation from God. Joseph Smith use them in the beginning to obtain revelations, then eventually was able to get rid of the "training wheels", and commune with God directly without any artifacts. It is said, with respect to the Book of Mormon that he initially used the Urim and Thummim, but eventually went to using a seer stone. However, Joseph received the Books of Moses and Abraham, and translated the Bible by direct revelation.]

Abr 3:2 And I saw the stars, that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God; and there were many great ones which were near unto it;

Abr 3:3 And the Lord said unto me: These are the governing ones; and the name of the great one is **Kolob**, because it is near unto me, for I am the Lord thy God: I have set this one to govern all those which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest.

[Abraham was able to see the stars through the Urim and Thummim. Back in those days, there was no light pollution, and a person could sit out all night looking at the stars in the clear desert sky, and use their imagination to see all kinds of things: the moon, stars, planets, constellations, and the movement with the times and seasons. Most of our knowledge of astronomy comes to us from that part of the world, and most of the stars have Arabic names.]

The name Kolob is interesting. The Hebrew word for *dog* is KLB or *keleb* (Hebrew words omit the vowels.) There is a star pronounced “kalb” in both the Hebrew and Arabic. This is used to denote the star Regulus in Arabic while the Syriac, which is also kalb denotes the star Sirius, the brightest star in the heavens. John Tvedtnes (an LDS researcher) also suggested that the Hebraic use of "KLB" as both the word dog and an astronomical term refers to the universality of Sirius as the "Dog Star".]

Abr 3:4 And the Lord said unto me, by the Urim and Thummim, that Kolob was after the manner of the Lord, according to its times and seasons in the revolutions thereof; that one revolution was a day unto the Lord, after his manner of reckoning, it being one thousand years according to the time appointed unto that whereon thou standest. This is the reckoning of the Lord's time, according to the reckoning of Kolob.

Abr 3:5 And the Lord said unto me: The planet which is the lesser light, lesser than that which is to rule the day, even the night, is above or greater than that upon which thou standest in point of reckoning, for it moveth in order more slow; this is in order because it standeth above the earth upon which thou standest, therefore the reckoning of its time is not so many as to its number of days, and of months, and of years.

Abr 3:6 And the Lord said unto me: Now, Abraham, these two facts exist, behold thine eyes see it; it is given unto thee to know the times of reckoning, and the set time, yea, the set time of the earth upon which thou standest, and the set time of the greater light which is set to rule the day, and the set time of the lesser light which is set to rule the night.

Abr 3:7 Now the set time of the lesser light is a longer time as to its reckoning than the reckoning of the time of the earth upon which thou standest.

Abr 3:8 **And where these two facts exist, there shall be another fact above them**, that is, there shall be another planet whose reckoning of time shall be longer still;

[You can read Abraham's description of the hierarchy of the planets for yourself. I'm not concerned about the details, only that there exists an organization and an order in the heavens. But the statement, which is repeated in the Book of Abaham about “where two facts exist, there shall be another fact above them” is used in reference to stars and intelligences, suggesting to the mind that this is one of those eternal principles which we can apply in order to discern further mysteries. There are a couple of things which come to mind as to the meaning of this. (1) No star has exactly the same

brightness and glory as another, and every intelligence is unique from every other intelligence in that it differs from one another. And (2) where two things (principles, facts, laws, objects, forces) exist in apparent opposition (meaning resistance, conflict, contrast, or merely juxtaposed) in relation to one another, there is always a higher or greater principle, fact, law, or object which resolves the opposition. This gives us the (formula or key) for understanding everything on the four worlds of existence: emanation, creation, formation, action. If you come across two things or principles or commandments which seem to be a paradox, there is always a higher or greater thing, principle, or commandment, which resolves or explains the apparent conflict.]

Abr 3:9 And thus there shall be the reckoning of the time of one planet above another, until thou come nigh unto Kolob, which Kolob is after the reckoning of the Lord's time; which Kolob is set nigh unto the throne of God, to govern all those planets which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest.

Abr 3:10 And it is given unto thee to know the set time of all the stars that are set to give light, until thou come near unto the throne of God.

Abr 3:11 Thus I, Abraham, talked with the Lord, face to face, as one man talketh with another; and he told me of the works which his hands had made;

[D&C 76:5 For thus saith the Lord--I, the Lord, am merciful and gracious unto those who fear me, and delight to honor those who serve me in righteousness and in truth unto the end.

D&C 76:6 Great shall be their reward and eternal shall be their glory.

D&C 76:7 And to them will I reveal all mysteries, yea, all the hidden mysteries of my kingdom from days of old, and for ages to come, will I make known unto them the good pleasure of my will concerning all things pertaining to my kingdom.

D&C 76:8 Yea, even the wonders of eternity shall they know, and things to come will I show them, even the things of many generations.

D&C 76:9 And their wisdom shall be great, and their understanding reach to heaven; and before them the wisdom of the wise shall perish, and the understanding of the prudent shall come to naught.

D&C 76:10 For by my Spirit will I enlighten them, and by my power will I make known unto them the secrets of my will--yea, even those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor yet entered into the heart of man.]

Abr 3:12 And he said unto me: My son, my son (and his hand was stretched out), behold I will show you all these. And he put his hand upon mine eyes, and I saw those things which his hands had made, which were many; and they multiplied before mine eyes, and I could not see the end thereof.

[When you are in the Presence of the Lord, he can show you visions of anything.]

Abr 3:13 And he said unto me: This is Shinehah, which is the sun. And he said unto me: **Kokob**, which is star [**Hebrew word for star**]. And he said unto me: **Olea**, which is the moon. And he said unto me: **Kokaubeam** [**plural form of the Hebrew word for star**], which signifies stars, or all the great lights, which were in the firmament of heaven.

Abr 3:14 And it was in the night time when the Lord spake these words unto me: I will multiply thee, and thy seed after thee, like unto these; and if thou canst count the number of sands, so shall be the number of thy seeds.

[All of this to illustrate to Abraham the extent of his children. Do you suppose that this promise to Abraham was once given to our Heavenly Father? “That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.” (D&C 76:24)]

Abr 3:15 And the Lord said unto me: Abraham, I show these things unto thee before ye go into Egypt, that ye may declare all these words.

[Abraham was a man of truth. He was comfortable with all truth. He could learn and teach in the palaces of Ur, the courts of Egypt, the temples of Salem, and the tents of desert nomads.]

Abr 3:16 **If two things exist, and there be one above the other, there shall be greater things above them;** therefore Kolob **[The dog star. The brightest star in the sky.]** is the greatest of all the Kokaubeam **[stars]** that thou hast seen, because it is nearest unto me.

Abr 3:17 Now, **if there be two things, one above the other,** and the moon be above the earth, **then it may be that a planet or a star may exist above it;** and there is nothing that the Lord thy God shall take in his heart to do but what he will do it.

[There’s that principle, again. It must be important, or the Lord wouldn’t keep pointing it out.]

Abr 3:18 Howbeit that he made the greater star; as, also, **if there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other,** yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end, they shall exist after, for they are **gnolaum**, or eternal **[from Hebrew ‘olam, meaning “everlasting”]**.

[You should be picking up the idea, by now, that these words aren’t just made up. These are actual Hebrew words, as many as I can find. Joseph Smith might not have the spelling exactly right, but there is no exact rules for transposing words from the Hebrew to the Roman alphabet.]

Abr 3:19 And the Lord said unto me: **These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all.**

[Here we reach the top. There is nothing greater than God, which is the one God, the greatest of all.]

Abr 3:20 The Lord thy God sent his angel to deliver thee from the hands of the priest of Elkenah.

Abr 3:21 **I dwell in the midst of them all;** I now, therefore, have come down unto thee to deliver unto thee the works which my hands have made, wherein my wisdom excelleth them all, for I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, **over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning; I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen.**

[“Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.” (D&C 93:29). Here is a list of the capabilities of unorganized intelligences, based on revelations given to various individuals:]

- **Characteristics**
 - Individual
 - Uncreated
 - Points of light and truth
 - Paired male with female
 - Unequal in intelligence
- **Capabilities:**
 - Communication
 - Free will (Ability to act as opposed to be acted upon)
 - Memory
 - Ability to respond to light (**Attracted to light, ability to evolve by receiving more light**)
 - Ability to exercise faith

Abr 3:22 Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

[God was able to observe the intelligences by the above capabilities, and determine (judge, separate) how they could best be organized, according to their intelligence (ability to respond to light and truth.)]

Abr 3:23 And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born.

[God stood in the midst of intelligences who had been organized into spirits, and He made the greatest and noblest of them His rulers. One of them was Abraham.]

Abr 3:24 And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell;

[One of the spirits who was like unto God counseled with other spirits (the great and noble) to form a world (Not out of nothing, but out of the lesser intelligences that were not suitable to be organized as humans, animals, or plants, but to become the basic elements.) And to form a world whereon the human, plant, and animal intelligences could dwell.]

Abr 3:25 And we **[the one like God and the great and noble]** will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

Abr 3:26 And they who keep their first estate [a condition of existence known as pre-mortal life] shall be added upon **[ascend to the next estate]**; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate **[spirits who followed Lucifer]**; and they who keep their second estate **[Fulfill the everlasting covenant in mortality.]** shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever **[ascend in glory from estate to estate]**.

[Remember that word 'olam? It also refers to estates.]

Abr 3:27 And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? **[Who will act in the office of the Redeemer and Mediator?]** And one **[of the great and noble]** answered like unto the Son of Man **[Christ]**: Here am I, send me. And another **[of the great and noble]** answered **[Lucifer]** and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first **[This is a very brief explanation. You can find more details if you search the D&C.]**

[Our Heavenly Parents needed a person to manage this operation, and to shephard souls as they went through mortal probation, and, since all would sin and fall short of the glory of God, and thus be unable to return to the Presense of God, to be their Savior.]

Abr 3:28 And the second was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him.

[Lucifer was only in it for the glory that he thought was his due. Christ did it for the love of all of us.]

Abraham Chapter 4

Here follows a creation story. This one has much more accurate translation of the original Hebrew than we find in the Bible. I'll point out some of the differencces as we go along. If people read this version of the creation, there would be less conflict with science. There is a book called the Sepher Yetzirah or "Book of Creation (Formation)". It is attributed to Abraham and is the oldest book on Jewish mysticism, known as the Kabbalah. It talks about how God invented the Hebrew alphabet and used to 22 letters as the DNA of creation.

Abr 4:1 And then the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning **[The course of God is one eternal round. The word for "beginning" is means the *head*, or the *first*. The same words are used for "the first of the month", or "the first of the year".]**, and they, that is the Gods **[Elohim, gods, plural, male and female]**, organized and formed **[A better word choice than "create", which implies to create something out of nothing.]** the heavens and the earth.

Abr 4:2 And the earth, after it was formed, was empty and desolate **[The KJV says "without form and void", but "empty and desolate" is the correct translation.]**, because they had not **formed** anything but the earth; and darkness reigned upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of the Gods was brooding upon the face of the waters.

Abr 4:3 And they (the Gods) said: Let there be light; and there was light **[In my opinion, the most profound words ever uttered. God create by the power of faith through his word, and things are allowed, not commanded, to be. "Let there be light" is the spiritual creation, followed by "and there was light", the physical creation. Contemplate this and you will see there is much more food for thought].**

Abr 4:4 And they (the Gods) comprehended the light, for it was bright; and they **divided** the light, or caused it to be **divided**, from the darkness.

[Notice how all of formation consists of a series of divisions into opposites. This is the reverse of the principle we discussed earlier. The cycle of creation with God is the eternal round of descent into

matter, followed by reunification (ascension) of matter back into spirit. This idea is not unique to Christian or Hebrew thought. It is also present in the other great religions of the East.]

Abr 4:5 And the Gods called the light Day, and the darkness they called Night. And it came to pass that from the evening until morning they **called** night; and from the morning until the evening they **called** day; and this was the first, or the beginning, of that which they called day and night.

Abr 4:6 And the Gods also said: Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and it shall **divide** the waters from the waters.

Abr 4:7 And the Gods ordered the expanse, so that it divided the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse **[the firmament, a kind of spiritual membrane to separate worlds]**; and it was so, even as they ordered.

Abr 4:8 And the Gods called the expanse, Heaven. And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; and this was the second time that they **called** night and day.

[In the Hebrew, “night” and “day” are undefined periods of time and bear no resemblance to our 24-hour days. Creation, however, did take place on a clock, using God’s time.]

Abr 4:9 And the Gods ordered, saying: Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the earth come up dry; and it was so as they ordered;

[Division of waters and dry land.]

Abr 4:10 And the Gods pronounced the dry land, Earth; and the gathering together of the waters, pronounced they, Great Waters; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed.

[The intelligences which composed the atoms of the dry land and the sea were capable of receiving and understanding commands from God, and they obeyed.]

Abr 4:11 And the Gods said: **Let us prepare the earth to bring forth grass**; the herb yielding seed; the fruit tree yielding fruit, after his kind, whose seed in itself yieldeth its own likeness upon the earth; and it was so, even as they ordered.

[This preparation was a process over time, not an instant event. We don’t know how much time, and we don’t know the process, but there is plenty of room for science to speculate. There doesn’t need to be a conflict between true science and true religion.]

Abr 4:12 And the Gods **organized the earth to bring forth** grass from its own seed, and the herb to bring forth herb from its own seed, yielding seed after his kind; and the earth to bring forth the tree from its own seed, yielding fruit, whose seed could only bring forth the same in itself, after his kind; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed.

[Again, preparation, not instant creation. For all we know, the Gods could have prepared the earth, and then planted seeds which they brought with them.]

Abr 4:13 And it came to pass that they numbered the days; from the evening until the morning they called night; and it came to pass, from the morning until the evening they called day; and it was the third time **[note: *time*, not a literal *day*]**.

Abr 4:14 And the Gods **organized the lights in the expanse of the heaven**, and caused them to divide the day from the night; and organized them to be **for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years**;

[Light plays a role in two places in the creation. First, there is the general organization and separation of light from darkness, then there is the organization of the sun, moon, and stars. The Hebrew calendar is based entirely on observable events in the heavens, not on arbitrary period of time determined by emperors, popes, priests, Romans, or Vikings. I rather suspect that when we return to Zion, we will be more closely observing the ancient Hebrew calendar and festivals.]

Abr 4:15 And organized them to be for lights in the expanse of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so.

Abr 4:16 And the Gods organized the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; with the lesser light they set the stars also;

Abr 4:17 And the Gods set them in the expanse of the heavens, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to cause to **divide the light from the darkness**.

Abr 4:18 And the Gods watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed.

Abr 4:19 And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that it was night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that it was day; and it was the fourth **time**.

Abr 4:20 And the Gods said: **Let us prepare the waters to bring forth** abundantly the moving creatures that have life; and the fowl, that they may fly above the earth in the open expanse of heaven.

[As with the land, the preparation of the waters was a process not an event.]

Abr 4:21 And the Gods prepared the waters that they might bring forth great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters were to bring forth abundantly after their kind; and every winged fowl after their kind. And the Gods saw that they would be obeyed, and that their plan was good.

Abr 4:22 And the Gods said: We will bless them, and cause them to be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas or great waters; and cause the fowl to multiply in the earth.

Abr 4:23 And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; and it was the fifth time.

Abr 4:24 And the Gods **prepared the earth to bring forth the living creature** after his kind, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind; and it was so, as they had said.

[This follows a natural evolutionary pattern if you want to think in those terms: prepare the land to bring for vegetation; prepare the seas to bring forth life; then, prepare the land to bring forth animals.]

Abr 4:25 And the Gods organized the earth to bring forth the beasts after their kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after its kind; and the Gods saw they would obey.

[Note that there is a period for preparation, followed by a period for organizing, then follows a period for manifesting.]

Abr 4:26 And the **Gods took counsel among themselves** and said: Let us go down and **form man in our image, after our likeness**; and we will give them dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

[God does everything through councils.]

Abr 4:27 So the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, in the image of the Gods to form they him, male and female to form they them.

[Elohim is a plural word which incorporates both male and female.]

Abr 4:28 And the Gods said: We will bless them. And the Gods said: We will cause them to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

[Notice the connection between “blessing” and “multiply and replenish the earth”. To have “dominion” means that we are stewards over the earth. A steward protects and preserves that which he is entrusted with. Dominion is not a license to exploit and destroy.]

Abr 4:29 And the Gods said: Behold, we will give them every herb bearing seed that shall come upon the face of all the earth, and every tree which shall have fruit upon it; yea, the fruit of the tree yielding seed to them we will give it; it shall be for their meat **[old word meaning “food”]**.

[Everything on this planet was provided to benefit us in some way. We will grow in knowledge as we discover those benefits.]

Abr 4:30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, behold, we will give them life, and also we will give to them every green herb for meat, and all these things shall be thus organized.

Abr 4:31 And the Gods said: We will do everything that we have said, and organize them; and behold, they shall be very obedient. And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; **and they numbered the sixth time.**

[Abraham Chapter 5](#)

Abr 5:1 And thus we will finish the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them.

Abr 5:2 And the Gods said among themselves: On the seventh time we will end our work, which we have counseled; and we will rest on the seventh time from all our work which we have counseled.

[The seventh day is as important as the previous six. We must not neglect the Sabbath, but enjoy its benefits to the fullest.]

Abr 5:3 And the Gods concluded upon the seventh time, because that on the seventh time they would rest from all their works which they (the Gods) **counseled among themselves to form**; and sanctified it.

And thus were their decisions at the time that they counseled among themselves to form the heavens and the earth.

[It was all decided and spiritually created in council.]

Abr 5:4 And the Gods came down and formed these the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were formed in the day that the Gods formed the earth and the heavens,

Abr 5:5 According to all that which they had said concerning every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Gods had not caused it to rain upon the earth when they counseled to do them, and had not formed a man to till **[This means more than just cultivate the ground. It means to serve the ground. You take care of Mother Earth; She takes care of you. We read in the Book of Moses how the earth was in pain because of the wickedness of men upon her face. How she must rejoice when men are righteous!]** the ground.

Abr 5:6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

Abr 5:7 And the Gods formed man from the dust **[The Hebrew word for dust is *adamah*, the source of the name *Adam* (meaning “man”).]** of the ground, and took his spirit (that is, the man's spirit), and put it into him; and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul **[spirit plus body]**.

Here is something interesting I found from examining the Hebrew letters for Adam. I know Joseph Smith studied Hebrew, but I don't know if he was aware of this when he translated or revealed the Book of Moses

The Hebrew word for *man* is ADM Aleph-Daleth-Mem. It was taken from the word for earth (ground) **Adamah**

Aleph signifies **spirit**.

Transpose the letters, you get DAM - **blood**

Mem signifies **water**

Adam(**ADM**) was formed from the dust of the ground (**ADMH**)

Thy brother's blood (**DM**) crieth to me from the ground (**ADMH**)

Mos 6:59 That by reason of transgression cometh the fall, which fall bringeth death, and **inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water (MEM), and blood (DAM), and the spirit (ALP), which I have made, and so became of dust (ADAMAH) a living soul (ADM), even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten;** that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory;

Mos 6:60 For:

- by the **water** ye keep the **commandment**;
- by the **Spirit** ye are **justified**, and
- by the **blood** ye are **sanctified**;

Abr 5:8 And the Gods planted a garden, eastward in Eden, and there they put the **man, whose spirit they had put into the body which they had formed.**

[Note that this took place before Adam was divided into Adam and Eve. Here's a puzzle for you. If Adam and Eve were still combined, what kind of spirit and what kind of body was that? And if Adam was made in the image of Elohim (male-female), what does this say about God? This is a very touchy subject, and I'm not going to tell anybody how to think about it. Maybe there is more than one right way to think about it, but a person could at least consider the possibilities.]

Abr 5:9 And out of the ground made the Gods to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life, also, in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Abr 5:10 There was a river running out of Eden, to water the garden, and from thence it was parted and became into four heads.

Abr 5:11 And the Gods took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it **["to till (or serve) the earth"]**.

[Have you even gone out to dig in the soil and plant a bush or tree? I find that to be a spiritual experience every time I do so. I believe our Mother loves it when we dig and plant, so that She can bring forth in abundane.]

Abr 5:12 And the Gods commanded the man, saying: Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat,

Abr 5:13 But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil **[There is much that could be written about this, and the resultant fall of man and the Atonement, but the subject of this chapter is just the creation, so I'll leave it be.],** thou shalt not eat of it; for in the time **[Note that it does not say *day*, but *time*.]** that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Now I, Abraham, saw that **it was after the Lord's time**, which was after the time of Kolob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning **[proof that the Lord is not talking about our 24-hour days].**

Abr 5:14 And the Gods said: Let us make an help meet for the man, for it is not good that the man should be alone, therefore we will form an help **[Hebrew: *ezer*, "help", "one who helps"]** meet **[suitable]** for him.

[Note that the man, Adam, was now divided into Adam and Eve.]

Abr 5:15 And the Gods caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and he slept, and they took one of his ribs **[*tsela*, meaning "rib" or "side"]**, and closed up the flesh in the stead thereof;

Abr 5:16 And of the rib which the Gods had taken from man, formed they a woman, and brought her unto the man.

Abr 5:17 And Adam said: This was bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; now she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man;

Abr 5:18 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave **[This is an interesting word. It means to join and also separate. The Hebrew words also means "to catch by pursuit", which is interesting.]** unto his wife, and they shall be one **[Hebrew: *echad*, meaning "one", "each", "unified", "one by one", "once for all", "first", and many more meanings]** flesh.

[Who said this? Adam or God? And what exactly did he mean by “one flesh”? Are we supposed to take all of this story literally, or all of it figuratively, or cherry-pick what is it literal and what is figurative? Or are we to take it the way Jewish scholars to and view the four level of interpretation separately and simultaneously?]

Abr 5:19 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Abr 5:20 And out of the ground [the elements of the earth] the Gods formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that should be the name thereof.

[Hebrew rabbis teach that Adam was able to discern the true nature and purpose of every animal and name them accordingly. In the Hebrew language, a name is far more than just a “handle”. A name embodies the nature and purpose of a person or thing, and should be given by revelation and the spirit of prophecy. Understand this principle, and many of the mysteries of the Gospel just clear themselves up.]

Abr 5:21 And Adam gave names to all cattle, to the fowl of the air, to every beast of the field; and for Adam, there was found an help meet for him.

[Keeping the above comment in mind, Adam gave Eve her name. *Chavvah* or *Hava*, meaning “life” or “living”. It comes from a root word meaning to “explain” or “reveal”. When, you think about it, a woman has a way of bringing the best (and the worst) out in a man.

It was Eve who lead both of them out of the garden into the world of trial and experience. This was necessary for their education, a word that means to reveal or bring out the inner nature of the student.

Joseph Smith said that “The Holy Ghost is a revelator.” Anciently, the Jews considered what we call “The Holy Spirit” to be the female aspect of God. If you court the Holy Spirit, like you would a woman, you will learn much more and draw much closer to Her and our Heavenly Father.

King Solomon, in Proverbs, equated the female aspect of God with Wisdom, and the male aspect with Knowledge. Knowledge gives us facts. Wisdom reveals the proper application of Knowledge. You need both. If you ever have a chance to listen to Denver Snuffer’s talk about “Our Divine Parents”, you will never again consider minimizing the role of women.]

THE WRITINGS OF ABRAHAM

These are apocryphal writings purported to be of Abraham. These came into my hands many years ago from contacts in the fundamentalist movement. They are also available on the Internet. I don't know who wrote them, but some of this is drawn from the Talmud. I find them to be inspirational, if not inspired. I include them because they provide a plausible back story to the lives of Abraham and his family and reveal more of his greatness. These writings parallel the Old Testament and Book of Abraham accounts of Abraham. There is mention of polygamy. There is also additional insight about the sacrifice of Isaac.

CHAPTER 1

BEHOLD my son, I have caused to come into thine hands a fragment of the writings of Abraham in which he hath left a record of his sojourn among men and of the blessings of the Lord unto him. This I have brought to thee that thou might restore that which is lost that the fullness of the record in its original purity might be found again among the sons of God.

[This writing starts out like it's a revelation from God to some unknown person. Soon, the writing will shift to the personal journal of Abraham, told in his own voice. Hopefully, the Spirit of the Lord will be with you and help you to discern what true principles are to be found in this record, and how they help turn your heart to the promises made to the Fathers.]

2 Behold, these things are sacred, wherefore, send them not forth unto the children of men but let them be for the edification of the elect that your hearts may be turned unto the Fathers and ye may draw close to them and they to you.

[I am not going to sugar coat this writing. The most important thing to be gained from reading this is to gain experience in using your discernment. Beware of any writing or revelation that seeks to build up your ego by telling you that you are reading some secret or sacred writing, which is shared with you only because you are "the elect". If you are one of the elect, you will know it, because the Lord would have told it to you, Himself. But, if this writing is so secret, how come it is readily available on the Internet, and how come it is based on the Pearl of Great Price, and the Talmud, which have been available for years? This is not to say that you may not be one of the elect, and that God has not placed this writing in your hands at this time for a reason. So please read with an open mind, and may you have the Holy Spirit as your reading companion to guide you along.]

3 Thus will the veil be withdrawn and ye will commune with the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn and shall even be ushered back unto my presence.

[You can part the veil and commune with the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn. You may even get to meet Noah and Abraham, and some of the other characters in this writing, and meet the Lord Himself. But these writings are not sufficient to do this. You must exercise faith in the Lord, repent, come to Him with a broken heart and contrite spirit, receive the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, and continue to live by every word that you receive from the Lord until you return to His Presence. I have no doubt that Abraham did this, and this writing shows some of the ordinances he received, and some of the evidences in his life that he knew the Lord, but knowing what Abraham did is not enough. You (and each of us) have to have the faith of Abraham and do the works of Abraham.]

4 Go to now and do this work which I have placed in thine hands. Amen.

[What “work” the recipient of this revelation did, I can’t say.]

CHAPTER 2

I, Abraham, was born the son of Terah who was Prime Minister to Nimrod **[A descendant of Ham. You can read about his genealogy in Genesis 10.]** who reigned in Ur of the Chaldees.

2 Now this Nimrod was a wicked man and an idolater and my father was led to follow after his abominations.

3 Moreover, Nimrod was a man of mighty power for he was Master Mahan and had in his hands the secrets of the ancients as they had come down from Cain wherein he knew the words of power and the signs for using them and he had the holy garments which had been given unto Adam in the garden in which was great power.

4 All of this power did Nimrod use to get gain after the manner of the secret combination.

5 With his power he had set out to build a tower which would reach to heave, even the city of my father Enoch which had been taken up, that he, Nimrod, might depose God from his throne for God had taken up his abode among the people of Enoch.

6 But God frustrated the plans of Nimrod by confounding the language of him and his people that they could no longer remember the sacred words and they scattered forth over the face of the earth.

7 At that time Nimrod came and established the city of Ur which is the City of Light **[The Hebrew word for “light” is *aur*.]**, for he yet retained his determination to build a city to rival the city of God that the light and power might center in him.

[Nimrod did all things in imitation of Enoch’s city, except that Nimrod’s city was built to glorify him and the works of man, not the Lord.]

8 And through the ministration of Satan he did receive again some of the words of power and did reorganize the secret combination among his people; but he had not power as at the first for the fullness of the pure language was not restored to him according to the decree of the Most High God.

9 Now, in all the wickedness of Nimrod, my father stood by his side for he was deceived by the subtle cunning and power which Nimrod possessed.

[To know that Terah was so highly placed in the kingdom adds even more depth to the story. Abraham was highly visible in the kingdom, making it even more important that he conform to the common practice of idol worship.]

CHAPTER 3

MY father Terah was the son of Nahor and Hanor was the son of Serug and Serug was the son of Reu and Reu was the son of Peleg in whose days the earth was divided.

2 Peleg was the son of Eber who was the son of Eber who was the son of Salah who was the son of Arphaxad the son of Shem, who was Melchizedek **[There are many traditions which claim that Shem was Melchizedek. Alma says that “he reigned under his father”, which would have been Noah.]**, which by interpretation is king priest **[Actually Melchizedek is Hebrew for “king of righteousness”.]**, for he was a king and a priest of the Most High God.

CHAPTER 4

NOAH was the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, who was taken up with his city that they might minister unto those in the flesh who sought a higher law than was available to them on the earth.

2 Now the birth of Noah was after this manner: While his father Lamech was journeying toward his home from preaching the gospel among the sons of men, most of whom had rejected his testimony, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him and saluted him, saying, Hail Lamech, thou favored one of God, for according to the promise of the Lord God to thy father Enoch, thou hast been chosen to be father to him though whom the seed of the Gods **[Israel]** will be preserved through the great flood which the Gods will send upon the earth in judgment, for all the sons of men have gone astray through the corruptions of those angels who fell from among the Gods and mingled their seed with the daughters of men and begat sons of great strength and mighty wickedness.

3 Yea, these have caused all flesh to corrupt their way before the Lord; wherefore they shall be destroyed, save thy son who shall be the seed of the angels.

CHAPTER 5

THE mother of Noah was also the daughter of Methuselah for Lamech and his wife had the same father but different mothers.

2 And when Noah was born, his body was full of light, which thing caused great consternation to his father and mother and his father's wives and children and all his house.

3 Moreover, the child stood upon his feet when he had come forth from the womb and his tongue was loosed and he did sing praises unto the Lord saying, I will praise thee, O Lord, for thou art the source of all power, yea, the wellspring whence it floweth unto the sons of God, and thou art also abounding in wisdom and great and mighty counsel unto thy servants.

4 Nevertheless, though thou art a God who is long-suffering in judgment, the sins of the children of men have come up before thy face and thy fury hath waxed strong and will be visited with judgments upon the earth.

5 Thy mercies, O Lord, are beyond number, but thou art a God that visiteth wrongdoing upon the children of men who the fullness of their iniquity hath come upon them.

6 Therefore shall the earth be destroyed according to the word of God which cannot fail.

7 For the waters of the flood shall come upon the earth and all things shall perish from before thy face, O Lord.

8 Nevertheless, in thee do we put our trust for in whatsoever thou doest, O Lord, thou hast ever done justly. Amen.

[This story of Noah's birth is also in the Book of Enoch.]

CHAPTER 6

THESE things were a source of amazement and concern unto Lamech who thereupon went unto his father, Methuselah, and finding him in the temple he said, My father, this day did my wife, thy daughter, bear a man-child.

2 And at his birth the room was full of light so that we could not look upon him and when we could look upon him, behold, the child's hair was white and fire seemed to come from his eyes and then he stood upon his feet and sang a hymn of praise unto the Lord and lo, he seemed to have the tongue of an angel.

3 Tell me now the meaning of these things and how can I raise such a son?

CHAPTER 7

HEARING these words, Methuselah, too, was troubled and said, Fear not, my son, for although I know now the meaning of these things, I will go unto my father, Enoch, for he is privy to the angels and he will be able to explain all things to us.

2 Whereupon, Methuselah traveled to the top of the highest mountain whence he could speak unto his father, Enoch, and he said unto him, **[Enoch and his city were already translated. Methuselah was caught up to the city of Enoch to meet him.]** My father, my daughter, who is the wife of my son Lamech, hath this day brought forth a man-child.

3 And at his birth the room was full of light so that they could not look upon him and when they could look upon him, Behold the child's hair was white and fire seemed to come from his eyes and then he stood upon his feet and sang a hymn of praise unto the Lord and lo, he seemed to have the tongue of an angel.

4 Thus saith my son Lamech, who is greatly perplexed as to the meaning of these things and how he can raise such a son.

CHAPTER 8

HEARING this report, Enoch comforted his son Methuselah, saying, Fear not, my son, nor fret thyself about this matter for did not a holy angel visit thy son Lamech and tell him that this should be the seed of the angels? And was it not so?

2 For this cause have these things happened; but on the eighth day when the child is circumcised, he shall be covered and shall appear as other men except that his hair shall remain white as a token that through him the Lord will do a mighty work.

3 This word did Methuselah return to his son Lamech and he was comforted.

[All of this story, including the meeting with Enoch is contained in the Book of Enoch.]

CHAPTER 9

AND on the eighth day when the child was circumcised, he was covered that he became as other men except that his hair remained white and they called his name Noah, which by interpretation is comfort, because, Lamech said, Mine heart is comforted to know that my seed shall be preserved through the great flood.

CHAPTER 10

AND the child grew and waxed strong in wisdom and mighty in the power of the priesthood for he was initiated into the Order of the Ancients in his childhood and learned the rites and ordinances and the powers of the priesthood with the signs and tokens and key words wherewith he could call upon the powers of heaven to combat the forces of the adversary.

[But, signs and tokens, alone, are not enough, if not coupled with personal righteousness and being bathed in the baptism of fire, which come about because of a personal relationship with the Lord.]

2 And when he was come of age, he took twelve wives and begat many sons and daughters who grew up in righteousness and served the Lord all their days and some died and others were caught up unto the city of Enoch.

[Mos 7:27 "And Enoch beheld angels descending out of heaven, bearing testimony of the Father and Son; and the Holy Ghost fell on many, and they were caught up by the powers of heaven into Zion."]

3 But in the next generation they corrupted themselves, for the daughters of Noah's sons did go forth and lay with the sons of men, which thing was an abomination in the eyes of God.

4 Wherefore, the Lord said unto Noah, Behold, the daughters of thy sons have sold themselves, for behold, mine anger is kindled against the sons of men, for they will not hearken to my voice; wherefore, all those who go in unto them will be destroyed with them.

CHAPTER 11

AND when Noah was four hundred and fifty years old, he begat a son and he called his name Japheth.

2 Forty-two years later he begat another son of her who was the mother of Japheth [**“opened”**], and he called his name Shem [**“name”**].

3 Eight years later Noah begat a son of his wife Naamah, who was of the seed of Cain, and he called his name Ham [**“hot”**], for he said, Through him will the curse be preserved in the land.

CHAPTER 12

NOW Noah had taken a wife of the seed of Cain, and she was a righteous woman; nevertheless, the curse remained with her seed [**We have no idea what the curse was, but it wasn't a black skin.**] according to the word of God.

2 And Noah took her on this wise: For the word of the Lord came unto Noah, saying, Take unto thyself Naamah, the daughter of Lamech, who dwelleth here in the city of thy fathers, for she hath been faithful to my gospel, wherefore I shall preserve through her the seed of Cain through the flood.

3 This Lamech who was the father of Naamah was of the seed of Cain being the son of Methusael, the son of Mahujael, the son of Irad, the son of Enoch, the son of Cain.

4 Lamech had married Adah [**“ornament”**] and Zillah [**“shade”**], the daughters of Cainan, the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam. Adah bare children unto Lamech, but Zillah was barren until her old age when the Lord opened her womb, and she conceived and bare a son and a daughter.

5 Her son she named Tubal Cain, saying, After I had withered away have I obtained him from the Almighty God.

6 Her daughter she named Naamah, saying, After I had withered away have I obtained pleasure and delight.

CHAPTER 13

WHILE Naamah was yet a child, great consternation fell upon the seed of Cain, for Irad the Son of Enoch, the son of Cain, had become a member of the secret combination and was privy to all its secrets until one night when the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, Irad, thou hast done evil instead of good and hast followed after Satan rather than God; wherefore, I shall destroy thee and thine house when I send in the floods upon the earth.

2 But Irad was pricked in his heart and pled with the Lord to show mercy and preserve his seed through the great flood.

3 Seeing that his penitence was true, the Lord said to him, **Irada, if thou wilt repent and reveal the evils of the secret combination unto the sons of Seth, I will have mercy upon thee and I will join thy seed unto the seed of Seth that it may be preserved through the great flood.**

4 Wherefore, Irad went forth and began to reveal the secrets of the sons of Cain unto the sons of Seth.

5 Lamech, being Master Mahan at that time, found Irad sitting in his garden with Joram, the young son of Irad, and slew him.

6 Thus Lamech slew Irad for the sake of the oath of the secret combination and he slew Irad's son with him.

7 But Tubal Cain, the son of Lamech, had followed him and viewed his evil deed which he had committed and he revealed it unto his mother Zillah and she unto her sister Adah.

8 Wherefore, Adah and Zillah confronted Lamech with his evil and cursed him in the name of the Lord for having slain Irad who had repented of his wickedness from among the sons of men.

9 And Lamech said unto his wives Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech; hearken unto my speech, for I have slain a man to my wounding and a young man to my hurt.

10 If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech shall be seventy and seven fold.

11 Lamech's wives, therefore, feared to confront him further, but Lamech repented not of his evil deeds and finding his son Tubal Cain at prayer, he slew him for having revealed his murders.

12 When Adah and Zillah, the wives of Lamech, learned of this, they took their remaining sons and daughters and went unto their father Cainan's city and revealed the remainder of the secrets of this evil combination among the sons of Adam.

13 Thus did Naamah come to dwell among the sons of Adam and she grew up before the Lord in righteousness and was known for her tender care toward the sick and the unfortunate.

14 Nevertheless, she had not husband because she was of the forbidden race.

CHAPTER 14

WHEN the word of the Lord came unto Noah, saying, Take unto thyself Naamah, the daughter of Lamech who dwelleth here in the city of thy fathers, for she hath been faithful to my gospel, wherefore, I shall preserve through her the seed of Cain through the flood, Noah went unto his father, Methuselah.

2 Methuselah inquired of the Lord and returned this word unto his son Lamech: Verily, thus saith the Lord, Mine handmaiden Naamah have I given unto my son Noah that the seed of Cain might be preserved through the great flood which I will send upon the earth.

3 Wherefore, let not my son Noah fear to take her to wife, for in so doing he shall be blessed for through him will come all nations.

4 Wherefore, say unto him, Noah, my son, I have looked upon the evils of the sons of men which have come up before me, for they have corrupted the whole earth save only this city in which thou dwellest.

5 Therefore, I will send in the floods upon the earth but thou and thy seed will I preserve through the flood, for I will send mine angels to instruct thee in the building of an ark wherein ye shall be saved.

6 Behold, I shall establish thy seed before me forever and I will spread them abroad over the earth as numerous as the sand upon the seashore.

7 Thy seed shall not cease as long as the earth shall stand but through thee and thy priesthood which will be preserved in thy seed shall all nations be blessed.

CHAPTER 15

WHEN Lamech returned this word to his son, Noah rejoiced and praised the Lord saying, I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, for thou hast been unto me a strong wall against all that would seek my destruction.

2 Yea, thou hast promised to shelter my from the disasters which are coming upon the earth, that the floods shall not come in upon me to destroy my seed from the earth.

3 Thou hast set my foot upon a rock that the sons of men shall not prevail against me.

4 Yea, I will walk in the way of the Ancients; in the paths which thou hast appointed will I spend my days for thou art my Shield and my Deliverer and in Thee will I trust all the days on my life. Amen.

CHAPTER 16

THUS did Noah take to wife Naamah, the daughter of Zillah, the wife of Lamech of the seed of Cain, and she bare him a son whom he named Ham, and thus was the curse preserved in the land through the great flood.

2 For when the patience of God was ended **in which He did grant a space of time for repentance unto the sons of men**, the floods came in upon the earth and destroyed all flesh from off the face of the earth save eight souls only, for Noah and his youngest wife Adah, and his three sons Shem, Japheth, and Ham and one of each of their wives were preserved in the **ark** which the angels had instructed Noah in building.

There is an alternative account of Noah and the ark in an ancient gnostic document called The Secret Book of John.

**But the great light of Providence warned Noah.
He preached to all of the children,
The sons of men,
But if they were strangers to him they didn't listen.
[It was not the way Moses said: "they hid in an ark."
Rather, they hid in a special place,
Not just Noah
but also many other people from the immovable race.
They went into hiding within a cloud of light.]**

3 The remainder of the righteous had died or been caught up into Enoch's city prior to the time of the flood, and these eight were saved.

CHAPTER 17

NOW when the flood had abated and the ark had come to rest upon the top of a mountain, Noah and his family descended the and after offering sacrifices unto the Lord and dedicating the land, they began to till the ground and raise all manner of crops.

2 And when the grape harvest was come in, Noah made wine and drank of the new wine in his tent and his heart was made glad and he rejoiced before the lord for the bounty which the Lord had given him.

3 And it was upon the Feast of Pentecost when Noah drank of the new wine before the Lord and lay down naked in his tent to sleep.

4 When Ham, the son of Noah, entered the tent he saw his father sleeping naked upon his bed with the sacred garments which had been given to Adam in the garden of Eden laying nearby.

5 Ham knew that he and his posterity could not bear the priesthood because of the curse of Cain which was upon them and knowing there was great power in the sacred garments, he stole them from his Father Noah and hurried to his tents.

[These garments were said to be the ones given to Adam and Eve.]

6 Rousing his family, Ham instructed them to strike their tents and led them away to the plain of Shinar where he dwelt and where Ham died.

7 Now Ham's wife was named Zeptah **[This could be another spelling for Egyptus.]** and she was also of the seed of Cain and they had a daughter named Zeptah.

8 This daughter, after the death of Ham, led a body of his people westward until they reached a body of water in the land of Zeptah, which is Egypt, where they settled and as the waters receded from off the land, they spread out and build many cities and temples.

CHAPTER 18

BEFORE the death of Ham, the sacred garments were given secretly by him to his son Cush

2 Cush also kept them hidden and in his old age gave them unto his son Nimrod **[Nimrod had the garments.]** and when Nimrod was twenty years of age, he put on the garments and he derived great strength and power from them.

3 Moreover, Nimrod was instructed in all the secrets of the evil combination by his father Cain, for Cain had not perished in the flood.

4 Wherefore, Nimrod became a mighty man among the sons of men and established his kingdom and grew stronger and stronger in wickedness after the order of the secret combination which was from the

beginning, for Nimrod spread his dominion over all mankind save those in the city of Shalom [**Home of Melchizedek**].

CHAPTER 19

SHEM ruled in the city of Shalom and he was called Melchizedek, for he reigned as king under his father Noah, and was a priest of the Most High God.

2 After the departure of Ham from the presence of his father Noah, Shem and Japheth dwelt together in peace under the benign rule of Noah; but in time, conflict arose among them and Noah led the seed of Shem to a new land which the Lord showed him where they built a city which they called Shalom, the City of Peace.

3 Noah invested his son Shem with authority to reign as Prince of Peace, and Noah devoted his days to instructing his people after the Order of the Ancients.

4 And his people dwelt in righteousness and worshipped the Lord their God and served Him.

5 They established the order of heaven among them and sought after the City of Enoch and the Lord came among them and ministered to them and those who sought for the gain of this world went out from among them, for they held all things common after the order of Enoch and no man had above his neighbor.

CHAPTER 20

AMONG those who went forth from the city of Shalom was Peleg, who traveled to the northwest and established a city after the order of his father Noah, for Peleg was the son of Eber, the son of Salah, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem; and his people sought after the heavenly order and obtained it for they were caught up like the City of Enoch.

2 But **Serug**, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, followed not after the way of his fathers, for he sought after gain for himself; wherefore, he led those who were of a like mind with himself out from the City of Peleg and they journeyed even unto the land of Shinar and became confederate with Nimrod.

[This is the point in the story where the descendants of Noah break off from the covenant traditions of their fathers and begin to worship idols. And they moved to the land where Nimrod ruled, and the land where Abraham was to be born.]

3 Under the direction of Nimrod, Serug and his companions entered into the secret combination and became men of power and wealth in Nimrod's kingdom.

4 In the land of Shinar, Serug begat Nahor, and Nahor begat Terah, my father.

5 And Terah became great in the eyes of Nimrod, and Nimrod elevated him over all his people to stand at his right hand and advise him on all matters.

[This describes how the descendants of Noah came to live in Ur.]

CHAPTER 21

NOW, my father Terah took many wives and begat many children.

2 And when he was sixty-five years of age, he took to wife Amthelo, the daughter of Cornebo, the son of Serug, and she was a young woman of fifteen years.

3 And when Terah was seventy years old, his wife Amthelo conceived and bare him a son whom he named Abram, which be interpretation is Exalted Father, for he said, Nimrod hath raised me on high over all his host, wherefore, my seed shall reign as gods forever.

4 Now this prophecy he spake, not knowing that it was of the Lord God.

CHAPTER 22

ON the night that I was born, there were great sings in the heavens, **and when Nimrod's astrologers saw them, they were astonished and they spake evil of me to the king, saying that surely I should overthrow his kingdom.**

2 Wherefore, they counseled the king to purchase me of my father that they might slay me and thus frustrate the plans of God.

3 King Nimrod thereupon sent for my father, Terah, and spake unto him of the words of the astrologers and asked for his son in return for a great sum of gold and silver.

4 But the Spirit of the Lord wrought upon my father that he was loathe to give me up to the king.

5 On the night that I was born, a son was also born unto one of my father's concubines and this child my father took unto the king and the king slew him in my stead, for thus had God ordained that I might grow up to serve him, the only wise and true God, and strive to establish his order in the earth all my days.

[This is fascinating. The overall story with the signs in the heavens and the killing of children is similar to the birth of Christ. Abraham was one of the greatest people who ever lived. Sometimes evil people do things that play into the hands of God.]

CHAPTER 23

THUS was my life saved by my father Terah, and he took me with my mother, Amthelo, and my nurse, Edna, unto a cave hidden in the mountains some distance from the city of Ur where he secreted us and visited us each month at the New Moon.

2 For my father thus informed the king that he went each month on the New Moon to a spot sacred to his family deity.

3 For in the kingdom of Nimrod, each man worshipped gods of his own make, gods of wood and stone, each after the imagination of his own heart.

4 Thus did I dwell in the cave with my mother, Amthelo, and my nurse, Edna, and knew no other man save my father, Terah, and my elder brothers, Haran and Nahor, who accompanied my father on his visits.

CHAPTER 24

WHEN I was three years of age, the Lord visited me in a dream of the night and he said unto me, Abram.

2 And I said, Here am I.

3 And he said unto me, Abram, I am the God of thy fathers Peleg and Shem and Noah.

4 It is I who preserved thy life when the wicked king Nimrod would have destroyed thee, for I softened the heart of thy father that he should hide thee away.

5 This I did for I have a mighty work for thee to do in establishing mine order upon the earth, and, verily, I say unto thee, I the end, through thee shall this wicked Nimrod be destroyed from off the face of the earth.

6 Behold, thou shalt remain in this cave with thy mother and thy nurse for yet seven years, and at the end of that time thou shalt depart and I will send mine angel to guide thee unto the city of thy father Noah where thou shalt be instructed in the way of life.

7 And from that time forth the Lord instructed me often in dreams of the night that my mind was opened to the ways of his kingdom.

[Abraham was taught by God from an early age.]

CHAPTER 25

WHEN I was ten years of age, I departed from the cave by night while my mother and my nurse slept and the angel of God met me and led me to the city of Shalom where Noah and his son Shem dwelt, and no man knew where I was.

[So, this is how Abraham found out about the city of Shalom (Salem). Can you imagine being kept in a cave for ten years of your life, not meeting any people other than your immediate family? One thing about this, Abraham never picked up any evil influences from society that he later had to unlearn.]

2 And I dwelt with Noah and Shem for thirty-nine years, being instructed in all the ways of the Most High God.

3 And finding great happiness and peace and rest therein, I sought for the blessings of the Fathers and I received, under the direction of Noah and Shem, those instructions whereby I might enter into the Order of the ancients and I became a rightful heir and high priest, holding the right belonging to the Fathers. For I was ushered into the Church of the Firstborn and tasted of the fruits of heavenly life.

[Abraham would have been 49 at this time. This record does Abraham a great injustice. It was revealed to a man who likely belonged to a fundamentalist group who put great emphasis on Priesthood ordinances and less emphasis on faith and righteousness, which Abraham surely must have had in order to have a relationship with the Lord, receive priesthood at His hand, receive the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, and become part of the Church of the Firstborn. This is about the time where the narrative in the Book of Abraham picks up.]

CHAPTER 26

IN my fiftieth year, Father Shem called me into his presence and instructed me to return to the house of my father, for there were many there now who were seeking after light and truth for they had seen the foolishness of worshipping idols of wood and stone, but they knew not where to find the true God.

2 And Father Shem blessed me saying, Blessed art thou Abram of the Most High god for **He hath looked upon thee and found thine heart right before Him.**

3 For this cause, the Most High shall visit thee and thou shalt stand at the head and be the father of a multitude, for many nations shall spring forth from thy loins.

[It's time for Abraham to officially begin his mission among men. It's time for him to have a companion and help meet for him.]

4 Behold, in thy father's house dwelleth **she to whom the promises belong**, for she is a princess in the house of the Most High and shall reign as a queen over thy posterity forever.

5 Seek after her and take her to wife for she will be the mother of the promised seed.

[Abraham had much seed, by many different women, but only by Sarah, whose name means "princess", did the promised seed come. Abraham, great as he was, couldn't do it alone.]

6 The blessings of the God of Noah attend thee, my son, as thou journeyest on thy way for, from this time forth, **thou shalt be a wanderer in the earth until thy seed shall come in to inherit this land by the power of God and the sword of His might.**

7 Be faithful always, preach the truth in soberness and be valiant in the cause of God, and thou shalt be blessed forevermore. Amen.

[Abraham received power in his Priesthood through all generations of time. Do you suppose he is still on the earth today, living another mortal life, teaching the Gospel, watching over his children, wandering the earth until they come to inherit the land promised to him?]

CHAPTER 27

WITH this blessing resting upon me, I gathered together my family, for I had taken **seven wives** in the city of Shalom who had borne me **fifty daughters**.

[This is a new one. You'll need to pray and ask the Lord about this, as well as everything else you read here.]

2 And although I had **no sons of mine own flesh**, yet I had **adopted twelve sons of those who were faithful to the Order of the Ancients and foremost among these was Eliezer of Damascus who had come to the city of Shalom seeking after the blessings of the Fathers and had remained as my son.**

[This is interesting. We do know about Eliezer, who Abraham considered naming his heir. And all the sons he had adopted. We read earlier that all those who receive the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost are adopted as sons and daughters of Israel, and hence, Abraham's seed. So, Abraham adopting seed even back than if very consistent.]

D&C 84:33 For whoso is **faithful** unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies.

D&C 84:34 They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron **and the seed of Abraham**, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

3 Him I appointed as steward over all I possessed for this journey, **for he stood as mine heir for I loved him as my son and brother.**

4 But Father Shem said unto me, **Eliezer is a good and righteous man and he shall be greatly blessed in time and in eternity, but he shall not be thine heir who shall be thine heir who shall take in the house of thy father, for she is ordained to be thy queen of queens and the mother of thine heir.**

5 Wherefore, as I have said, I gathered together my wives and my daughters and my adopted sons and their wives and children and I said unto them, Hear my words, beloved and hearken unto my speech, for **I have been sent with a mission** unto the house of my father in the land of Shinar **to gather out the pure in heart who are seeking after the true God.**

6 Gather together all your goods and make you tents in which to dwell and saddle your asses to travel upon for the Most High God hath declared that we shall be wanderers upon the earth from this time forth until our seed shall come in to inherit this land by the power of God and the sword of his might.

CHAPTER 28

THEN commenced they their preparations and on the appointed day, all was in readiness for our departure.

2 And when Father Shem came forth to bless us, Father Noah came also with him.

3 Now Father Noah dwelt in the temple in the heart of the city of Shalom and seldom came out of the holy place, for I had never seen him without its sacred precincts.

4 But he came forth at this time and lifted up his hands and blessed us in the name of the Most High God and we departed from his house.

[There are many ways to approach the Lord in prayer, besides the set way we were taught in Primary. If you always place your body in the same fixed position, you may tend to offer the same fixed prayer, with no thought behind it. Try holding your hands in various positions. How do you expect to see angels when your eyes are closed and your head is bowed? What kind of message is that sending to the Lord?]

CHAPTER 29

WE journeyed slowly for their sake of the women and children and we journeyed not upon the Sabbath day nor upon any of the holy days, for we thought it better to worship the Lord our God according to the pattern of heaven than to proceed rapidly upon our way, and we did know that the Lord prospered us in our journey and protected us from the power of all our enemies because we did faithfully serve Him and worship before His throne according to the divine pattern.

2 But at length we did arrive in the land of Shinar at the city of Ur.

3 Now the size of this city was immense.

4 Its buildings were grand and beautiful with gardens upon the rooftops and rivers of water running down from level to level.

5 The streets were wide and smooth and the inhabitants wealthy, dwelling in luxury.

6 Merchant caravans continually entered and left her gates and the great of all nations came here to pay homage to the mighty King Nimrod.

7 Nevertheless, the wealth of this great city was built upon sin for the people served many idol gods and offered upon their altars men, women, and children after the same manner as the Egyptians.

[They worshipped the work of their own hands.]

8 And they had numerous slaves who were kept down in bondage and poverty and were driven like dumb beasts to provide the luxury in which their masters dwelt.

[How easy it is to overlook cheap labor, here and in Asia, those who work hard to provide food, assemble electronics, and sew clothing so we can enjoy our lives of luxury.]

9 Behold, the inhabitants of the city did delight in whoredom and adultery and murder and all manner of evil, whereby they might get gain.

10 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them.

11 Nevertheless, he did let them go on that they might be fully ripened in iniquity before the fullness of his wrath should fall upon them.

[We see this principle at work with the people of Amonihah in the Book of Mormon, and with the peoples of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Old Testament. Samuel the Lamanite taught that the sign that a people have ripened in iniquity is when they begin to drive out the righteous from among them.]

12 All of these things did the Lord God show unto me in a dream on the night before we entered into the city of Ur; and He said unto me, Abram, this city is vile and corrupt, but in it are some few souls who have not bowed the knee to their idol gods and it is because of their prayers that I have brought you here, that they might be taught to worship the true God after the order of heaven and be led out from wickedness and bondage.

[Abraham learned the lesson that even though a city is “vile and corrupt”, there may be a few righteous souls the may be spared, or led away to safety. This explains why Abraham reasoned with the Lord to spare Sodom and Gomorah if some righteous people could still be found living there.]

13 Wherefore, go unto thy father's house, for thy mother hath sorrowed for these many years, and I have softened the heart of thy father toward these that he shall make thee welcome and will protect these against the anger of the king such that thou shalt be able to accomplish thy mission.

14 Behold, Abram, I am the Lord God of thy Fathers Shem and Noah, and of all the righteous Fathers back to Adam.

15 Wherefore, I will remain with thee and confirm upon thee all the blessings of the Fathers and thou shalt stand at the head of a multitude. Amen.

CHAPTER 30

IN the morning before entering the city, I gathered my family together consisting of my seven wives, my fifty daughters, my twelve adopted sons, and three hundred and fifty menservants whom Shem had sent with their families, being in all six thousand three hundred and seventy souls.

[There are 6,370 people! And they are all going to stay at his father's house?]

2 And I said unto them, Behold, this great city is steeped in wickedness and sin for the secret combinations which was from the beginning doth hold her sway.

3 Wherefore, ye shall remain here under the direction of Eliezer while I go alone into the city unto my father's house, for the Lord God of Shem and of Noah hath promised me that he will protect me against the anger of the king such that I shall be able to accomplish my mission.

[No. They waited outside the city.]

4 I lead my family in prayer before the Lord, kissed them all and departing from them, entered into the city.

CHAPTER 31

BEING led by the Spirit of the Lord, I found my father's house and, entering the gate, addressed the guard who was standing there, saying, Behold, I am Abram, son of Terah, who hath spent these forty years in the house of Shem.

[Abraham had been away from home most of his life. He probably didn't even remember where his family lived.]

2 Take me now to my father.

3 The guard stood as one dumbfounded, knowing not what to make of such a greeting, but at length called a boy whom he dispatched to locate my father.

4 At length the lad returned, followed closely by my father who was greatly surprised to see me, but who recognized me as his son by the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord.

5 By this time my arrival had caused great excitement throughout my father's household, which was very large, and my mother, having heard of my coming, hastened to the place where we were, weeping and rejoicing for she had thought that I had wandered from the cave and been slain by wild beasts in the wilderness.

6 At length she led me away to her chamber to talk with me and I told her of all that had transpired with me since my leaving the cave of my being led by the angel to the city of Shalom, of being instructed under the direction of Shem, of the increase of my family and of the mercies of the true God of heaven exercised in my behalf.

7 I talked to her of the futility of worshipping idols of wood and stone made by men's hands which have no power in them and of the Order of the Ancients which was preserved in the city of Shalom under Noah and Shem which I had been sent to proclaim in the great city of Ur.

CHAPTER 32

MY mother heard all my words and rejoiced in them for she was one whose heart had been turned from the worship of dumb idols to the worship of the unknown God.

2 Moreover, a small body of like believers numbering about one hundred souls met secretly in my father's house to worship the unseen God and pray for further light concerning his ways, among whom were my brother Haran, with his son Lot and his daughters Milcah and Sarai, and my brother Nahor.

3 Now, when my mother had heard my words, she bade me remain with her until evening when the believers were to meet in her rooms.

[If you recall, Abraham's mission was to gather out the pure in heart, and also to meet his future wife, Sarah.]

4 Wherefore, that night I met with those who had rejected the idolatry of their fathers and they were all of the seed of those who had come out from the city of Peleg.

5 Wherefore, I rehearsed unto them all the things I had told unto my mother and they likewise rejoiced therein.

6 But unto my father I spake not of these things at this time for he was yet privy to Nimrod and was steeped in his evil ways.

CHAPTER 33

WHEN I had dwelt in my father's house for seven days teaching the word of life unto the believers, I went unto my father as he sat in his outer court with his servants attending to affairs of state.

2 And when he would hear me, I said unto him, Father, where is the God who created heaven and earth and all the hosts of them?

3 My father Terah answered me and said, Behold, my son, those gods who created all things are here with us in the house.

4 My lord, show them to me I pray thee, I exclaimed.

5 Whereupon my father Terah led me unto a chamber in the center of his house wherein were twelve great idol gods and numerous smaller ones.

6 And my father said unto me, Behold, my son, these twelve great ones are rulers among the gods and this largest one is ruler above all and these others were their assistants in creating all things.

7 And my father Terah bowed down and worshipped before his idol gods and we departed from them.

CHAPTER 34

WHEN I departed from the presence of my father, I went unto my mother and said unto her, My mother, there is a great evil in this place for my father keepeth a room full of idols in the center of his house which thing is contrary to the commandments of God, wherefore the wrath of God shall not depart from this house until they are destroyed.

2 Let one of the young men be sent, therefore, to fetch a kid of the goats and make thereof savory meat for therewith shall I destroy these idols in which is neither life nor power.

3 My mother, therefore, summoned one of the young men who was with her in the house and sent him to fetch a kid of the goats whereof she made savory meat.

4 When it was prepared, I took the savory meat from her and went into the room where by father kept his gods and I prayed there unto the Lord my God saying, O Lord god of Shem and of Noah, look upon me here in my weakness and strengthen mine arm that I may destroy these false gods and give me the wisdom and strength to go through all that follows and endure unto the end in service unto my God.

5 When I had said these words, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, even the Spirit of prophecy, and I was led to exclaim, Woe unto my father and this wicked and corrupt people among whom he dwelleth, whose hearts are all inclined to vanity, for they serve idols of wood and stone, the workmanship of their own hands, which neither eat nor smell nor hear nor speak, for there is no power in them and those who serve them shall likewise be powerless to escape when the wrath of God shall overtake them in a day they think not.

CHAPTER 35

AT this time the Spirit of God fell upon me in mighty power to strengthen mine arm, and picking up a hatchet which I had brought with me for that purpose, I destroyed all my father's idols, both wood and stone, by the power of God which was in me, except for the largest in whose hand I placed the hatchet.

2 Then going to my father I said unto him, My Father, I have seen a wondrous thing for my mother did make me savory meat this day to offer before the gods who created all things.

3 And when I took the meat in unto them, they all reached forth their hands to partake thereof.

4 When the one who is ruler above all saw their words, he being angered left the room and returned with a hatchet wherewith he destroyed the other gods, both wood and stone; and behold, he standeth there even now with the hatchet in his hand and the savory meat before him.

CHAPTER 36

HEARING these words, my father hastened unto the room of his gods and found it even as I had said, and his anger was kindled against me and he said, This is an idle tale thou hast told me and false.

2 Why hast thou done this thing and lied unto me?

3 These gods have no life in them to do these things for they are wood and stone and, behold, I myself have had them made by the craftsmen.

4 Why hast thou then come into mine house to destroy my gods?

[Abraham played a clever trick to get his father to admit that the idols had no power.]

CHAPTER 37

THE Spirit of the Lord fell upon me at this time that I should answer my father and I said unto him, How is it thou servest these idols of wood and stone, the handiwork of the craftsmen in which is neither life nor power to act?

2 Can these which cannot deliver themselves from the hatchet deliver thee from the power of the enemy?

3 Can they hear thy prayers when thou callest upon them from out of the midst of thine afflictions?

4 Surely it is an evil thing that thou and thy people should serve these false gods for the Lord Jehovah, he is the God who created heaven and earth and all that in them is, and he hath commanded all men to worship him only and to serve him all their days.

5 Behold, your fathers in the days before the great flood worshipped false idols after the same evil combination into which ye have entered and, because of their perversions, they were destroyed.

6 Will ye also go on in their wickedness to bring down the wrath of the Most High God upon you that ye, too, should be destroyed from under heaven?

7 Nay, my father, but repent of this evil and turn unto the Lord thy God and live.

8 So saying, I took the hatchet from the hands of the remaining idol and smote him with it until he was destroyed.

[Abraham destroyed the last of his father's idols.]

CHAPTER 38

MY father, hearing my words and seeing what I had done, increased in anger against me and hastened from his house unto the king, for he had access to King Nimrod both day and night.

2 When he had entered the king's presence, he bowed down before him and he saith unto him, My lord king, fifty years ago a man-child was born unto my wife Amthelo, and when he was ten years old, we went on the new Moon to worship our ancestral god when my son wandered off into the desert and was lost.

3 But he was found by the people of the desert and raised by them and he hath recently found his way back into my house and I have received him with honor as my son.

4 Notwithstanding this, he did this day enter into the room of my gods and destroy them and hath spoken against our gods and against that ancient order which hath been handed down from our first father whereunto we are called.

5 Now, therefore, my lord king, send for him that he may be judged according to our law that this evil may be put away from among us.

6 The king thereupon sent three of his mighty men who fetched me from my father's house and brought me before the king.

[Terah had to lie to Nimrod because he claimed earlier that he had brought his son before the king who had him slain.]

CHAPTER 39

WHEN I appeared before King Nimrod, he was seated upon his throne in all his glory, but it was as darkness to me.

2 At his right hand sat my father Terah and around them sat the princes and noble ones of his realm.

3 And the king said unto me, What is this thing that thy father saith unto me, that thou didst this day enter into the room of his gods and destroy them and that thou hast spoken against our gods and against that ancient order which hath been handed down from our first father whereunto we are called?

CHAPTER 40

I answered the king saying, Why dost thou go on in wickedness to worship these dumb idols in which there is no power even to save themselves?

2 Not only this, but thou hast led others to worship them and to enter into that order which is most abominable in the eyes of the Most High God, for your father from whence it cometh is the devil and it is full of lies and blasphemies and all manner of evil that men should lie and murder to get gain.

3 Why wilt thou not serve the Most High God who created all things in heaven and on earth, who hath created these and holdeth the power to sustain thy life or to destroy thee?

4 O foolish, ignorant, wicked king, we shall be unto thee forever and ever for thou art the son of Perdition for it is he who is thy father.

5 Thou hast corrupted the earth with thy sins and with the sins of thy people who follow thee.

6 It was for entering into this wicked combination to get gain that your ancestors were destroyed in the flood when only eight souls were saved.

7 Wilt thou and thy people follow in their paths?

8 Then the wrath of the Most High God will descend upon thee to smite thee from before his face.

9 Now put away these evil ways and turn unto the Most High God and serve Him that there may be hope for thee.

10 But behold, I see that thine heart is hardened in iniquity that there is no repentance for thee, for the evil one hath sealed thee his; wherefore all thy ways shall come to naught and thou and thy people shall be destroyed from off the face of the earth.

CHAPTER 41

THEN I lifted up mine hands to heaven and prayed saying, O Lord God, thou who sees all the ways of the wicked and will bring every evil deed into judgment, look upon these evil ones and destroy them that the whole earth be not corrupted by them and brought to destruction.

CHAPTER 42

WHEN the king heard my words and the prayer which I uttered, he ordered me to be cast into the prison house until he had determined what to do with me.

[Abraham's words struck Nimrod to the core. Unable to face his deeds, he cast Abraham into prison, so he wouldn't be reminded of his guilt.]

2 And after ten days, the king gathered together all his counselors and rehearsed unto them all things concerning me.

3 And when he had rehearsed all things unto them, he asked them, saying, What judgment shall such an one receive who hath reviled the king and our gods and our holy order?

[Nimrod needed time to cool off and recover from the shock of seeing Abraham alive, and knowing that Abraham would be his undoing. Nimrod didn't want to add guilt to guilt, so he passed the buck off to his advisors, standard operating procedure for a weak leader who is afraid of taking responsibility.]

4 And they returned judgment unto him saying, The man who revileth the king should be hanged from a tree until he is dead and the tree then felled to the ground while all the people shall shout, Thus shall it befall him who revileth the king.

5 But this man hath not only reviled the king but also our gods and our holy order and, according to our law, such an one shall be cast into a furnace of fire until he be consumed that naught remain of him in the earth.

[He should be hung from a tree, but hanging's too good for him. Toss him into a furnace. Ala Shadrack, Meshack, and Abednego. As I said, the story of Abraham parallels other Biblical stories.]

6 Let therefore the fire be increased in the king's furnace which is in Casdim where the king's bricks are made and let this blasphemer be cast into the fire that he be consumed.

CHAPTER 43

THE king so commanded and for three days and three nights was the fire preparing in Casdim and at the end of that time I was brought forth from the prison to be cast therein.

2 Nevertheless, while I was in the prison the Lord sent His angels to minister unto me and to comfort me and they said unto me, Fear not, Abram, for thy work is not yet finished for thou shalt yet become the father of many nations and thou shalt preach the gospel in far places, even in the land of Egypt shalt thou declare the mysteries of thy God.

[A servant of God is never allowed to perish until he has fulfilled his mission, however short or long that may be.]

3 And though they cast thee into the furnace, is not the Lord able to deliver thee therefrom?

4 For through thy deliverance shall many be brought to bow down and worship the Lord thy God and forsake the evils of Nimrod.

[The Lord never wastes an opportunity to teach and give people a chance to repent.]

CHAPTER 44

THEREFORE, I came forth from the prison confident in the power of my God and in His promise that I should be delivered from the fire.

[This is faith. Don't just be comforted, but step forward boldly in confidence.]

2 But as I came forth, the astrologers of the king looked upon me and by the power of Satan they recognized me, for they saw me clothed in light.

[Abraham was enveloped in a baptism of fire. When you are in such a state, Satan recognizes you, but he cannot touch you. We each carry a degree of glory with us all the time. We are able to prevail over our adversaries to the degree that our glory overpowers them. If you lack the glory, but have the faith, you can request Christ and/or angels to assist you.]

3 And they cried out unto the king saying, O king of all the earth, surely this is the man of whom we spake unto thee fifty years ago that he should rise up to overthrow thy kingdom.

4 Wherefore was he not slain?

[Everybody thought Abraham had been "disposed of" as a child, so he would never bother them again.]

CHAPTER 45

HEARING these words, the king was greatly troubled, and calling my father Terah before him, he exclaimed, Is this then thy son who was to have been slain?

2 And what child then did I slay at his birth?

3 Speak now the truth and thou shalt go free; but if thou speakest not the truth, thou shalt die with thy son.

4 And Nimrod caused my father to swear concerning the matter.

[I thought Terah had already explained this to Nimrod, but now, hearing additional witnesses, Nimrod realized the truth, but wanted it hear it directly from the mouth of Terah.]

CHAPTER 46

AND my father answered the king saying, My lord king, I am guilty.

2 For because of my tender feelings toward my son, I did substitute for him the son of my concubine who was born on the same night.

3 The king's wrath mounted and in his anger he cried, Who advised thee to do this thing?

4 Surely that man shall die.

5 My father, being terrified at the kings' anger said, It was my son Haran who so advised me.

[Haran lied to the king to spare his own life.]

6 Now Haran had not advised my father of anything, but the Spirit of the Lord had wrought upon my father that he was loathe to give me up to the king.

7 Nevertheless, Haran was privy to what my father had done and Haran was one of the believers in the true God of heaven, but his heart was not firm nor his faith sure.

8 Wherefore, Haran said in his heart, If Abram be delivered from the furnace, then shall I know that the God of Abram is indeed the true God.

[Haran, of course, did not so advise Terah. Haran was weak of faith and sought for a sign. There would be a sign given, but in order to save Abraham, not to strengthen Haran's faith.]

9 Wherefore, Haran wavered in his faith and his confidence waxed not great in the Most High God, but my confidence was secure, for I knew that it rested upon the Rock of my salvation and the word of God faileth not.

CHAPTER 47

NOW when the king heard the words of my father, he caused that Haran should also be taken with me and, leading us to the vale of Casdim, they stripped us of all our clothing and bound us with cords and cast us into the fire.

2 Now Haran, because his faith was not perfect in the Lord his God, was consumed in the fire that no trace of his body remained, but my faith remained firm in the Lord and He sent His angels to sustain me and release me from my bonds and I was three days and three nights in the furnace with the angels, conversing with them and beings instructed by them.

[The Book of Abraham says that Haran died of the famine, and here he dies in the furnace, but Abraham survives. So, which is true? This is a great lesson in faith. Haran saw his sign all right. The last thing he saw before dying was the sight of angels protecting his brother, while he was being painfully consumed by the flames. What a horrible thought!]

CHAPTER 48

AFTER the third day, the king sent his servants to govern the fire that it might again be used for making brick.

2 But when they came up to the furnace, behold, I was sitting therein conversing with the angels whom God had sent.

3 Therefore, the servants of the king, being greatly astonished, went and told him of this matter, but he would not believe them.

4 However, when the men persisted in their tale and showed great consternation, King Nimrod himself came unto the furnace, but the angels had departed and I sat alone in the flames.

5 When he saw me therein unconsumed, the king cried out in alarm, O Abram, art thou a sorcerer greater than ours that thou shouldst live in the flames unconsumed?

[After three days in the furnace, the king's men saw that Abraham was not burned. They went to tell the king. The king didn't believe them, so he came to see for himself. Nimrod still could not acknowledge that this miracle came from God, so he supposed to be some kind of sorcery.]

6 But I answered him, Not so, O king, but the God of heaven who is the true god above all hath sent his angels unto me and hath preserved me from this fire.

7 Being much amazed the king exclaimed, Come forth then from the fire for I see that no power of mine can harm thee.

CHAPTER 49

WHEREUPON, I ascended from the furnace and stood before the king and his counselors who examined my closely but, behold, even mine hair was not singed.

2 Wherefore, the king caused garments from his own wardrobe to be brought and I was clothed therein and he caused me to be seated upon a throne at his right hand where my father was wont to sit and he said unto me, What of Haran thy brother who was cast into the furnace with thee?

3 Did the angels carry him away to some far place that he might be saved?

4 But I replied unto him, Nay, but the faith of my brother was not perfect in the Most High God; wherefore he was consumed in the flames.

5 Upon hearing this, the king marveled and permitted me to speak in his court concerning the Most High God and the redemption which should be wrought in behalf of those who believed on his name.

6 Nevertheless, the heart of the king was not changed, for he gloried in power and he thought to learn from my power by permitting me to speak.

[After witnessing all these miracles, the king's heart was not changed.]

7 But about three hundred men of those who sat in the king's court were converted unto the Lord and followed no more after the evil order of Nimrod, wherefore, they were cast out of the king's presence; but as for me, the king gave me many gifts and sent me away in peace and many were joined unto the believers in the Lord from that day.

[But others witnessed this and believed. The king's tenuous grasp on reality was being severely threatened, but rather than face the change, he banished everyone whose presence challenged his world view from out of his sight.]

8 For having heard of my salvation from the fire, multitudes came to my father's house to hear of the God who could do such mighty things and many were converted unto the truth.

[So, Abraham's father's house changed from being a center of idol worship, to being a center for the worship of the true God.]

CHAPTER 50

NOW, among the believers were Lot, the son of Haran, and Haran's daughters, Milcah and Sarai.

2 Milcah was fair, but Sarai was beautiful above all women.

3 Her face was as that of an angel filled with light, her cheeks as two roses in full bloom, her hair as spun gold which men treasure above all, her eyes as pools of blue reflecting the glory of God's sky, her nose delicate and lovely, and her countenance truly was fair as the sun.

4 Her breasts like two mountains rising above the plain of Shinar were fair to behold, and her complexion truly like the clouds in purity.

5 Her arms were comely, her hands perfect and delightful to behold, always in the service of those in need and quick to hasten to the service of the Lord her God.

6 Her palms were lovely, unmarred by her constant labor, her fingers long and slender.

7 Her feet were comely and always set in the path of truth.

8 Her thighs were well-rounded and soft, yet never failing to sustain her in her labor of love in behalf of the servants of God.

9 Truly no maiden was fairer than Sarai, the daughter of Haran, for her beauty was greater than all other women and she excelled them all.

10 But with her beauty was great wisdom and perfect faith in the Lord and constant service in behalf of the saints, for her hands never cease from blessing the people of God.

11 Wherefore, my brother Nahor took Milcah, the daughter of Haran, to wife, but I Abram, took Sarai at the direction of the Lord and I found great joy in her.

[Abraham and his remaining brother Nahor, each took wives of the daughters of Haran (their nieces) to wife. This was a mercy to them, since their father was gone, and being a women in those times, fared a lot better being married. Abraham was clearly in love with Sarah, for she had beauty, wisdom, and faith: an unbeatable combination.]

CHAPTER 51

BUT, behold, Satan was not content to have me continue to disrupt his kingdom in peace; therefore, he sent a dream unto Kingdom Nimrod in which the king did see that I should be the destruction of himself and of his kingdom.

2 Moreover, it was shown the king in his dream that three of his own household, even Zeptah, Lilith, and Nefritiri, daughters to Onitah, the son of Nimrod, who were virgins, had joined the believers of the Most High God.

3 When the king awoke from his sleep, he was angry and he caused that I, with these three virgins, Zeptah, Lilith, and Nefritiri, should be seized and bound and carried to Photiphar's hill at the head of the plain of Olishem to be sacrificed unto the god of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

4 And these three virgins did the priest of Pharaoh offer up upon the altar and they died singing praises to the Lord and bearing witness to the truth, wherefore, they shall be blessed forever for they have entered into the rest of the Lord.

[The three virgins had achieved that level of faith and peace that they could even die, focused on the Lord, rather than their circumstances. Much like Stephen.]

CHAPTER 52

AND when these virgins were slain, the priests of Pharaoh took me also and laid me upon the altar to slay me. But I cried unto the Lord my God for I knew that my mission was not yet ended.

2 And the Lord heard my voice and sent His angel to loose the cords wherewith I was bound.

3 And I saw the Lord seated upon His throne and He said to me, Abram, Abram, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee and have come down to deliver thee and to take thee away from the father's house and from all thy kindred into a land which is unknown to thee, a land which I have promised unto Noah should be an eternal inheritance unto the promised seed.

4 Behold, I will lead thee by mine hand and will put upon thee my name that thou shalt bear the priesthood of the fathers and the power thereof.

5 As it was with Noah, so shall it be with thee that through thy ministry and the ministry of thy seed bearing this priesthood, my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God.

6 And the Lord broke down the altar of the idol gods by an earthquake and smote their priests that they were all destroyed.

[This parallels the account in the Pearl of Great Price. The Lord places his Name upon Abraham, of which Abraham and his seed are to bear witness forever.]

CHAPTER 53

BUT I hastened to my father's house where all the believers were gathered, fasting and praying for me and I said unto them, Up, for this day we shall depart from this city that the Lord may visit it in wrath and vengeance.

2 Wherefore, all the believers gathered together and followed me out of the city to my camp.

3 And we struck our tents and departed from the land of Shinar to go to the city of Shalom to confer with Father Shem.

4 And my father also, seeing that the king's face would be set against him, gathered together his goods and followed after me.

5 We journeyed slowly, for I had with me many souls, both women and children and women with child.

[They departed Mesopotamia to return to Shalom (Salem). They traveled slowly, as Jacob did with his party when they left the slowly home of Laban to return to Canaan.]

CHAPTER 54

WHEN at length we arrived at the city of Shalom, Father Shem **[Melchizedek]** came forth to greet us, bearing bread and wine which he blessed and gave to us and he said unto me, Blessed art thou, Abram, for the Most High God hath multiplied thee and behold, thy seed shall be even as the sand upon the seashore without number.

2 Go to now with this great multitude into the land of Canaan for unto thee and thy seed will I give this land for an everlasting inheritance, saith the Lord God Almighty. Amen.

[Notice how easily speaking in the Name of the Lord came to the lips of Melchizedek].

CHAPTER 55

THUS we departed from the presence of Shem and moved to the vicinity of Ludor which city we denominated Haran.

2 And we dwelt in the suburbs of Haran for three years for there was much pasture there and a space large enough for the multitude which accompanied me.

3 And I preached the gospel in Haran and many souls were added unto the faithful in that place.

CHAPTER 56

AND there was a famine in the land, but the land of Haran was blessed for our sakes that the famine there was light.

2 But at the end of three years, the famine abated throughout the land; wherefore Lot, my brother's son, and I went before the Lord in prayer after the manner of the ancients **[True Order of Prayer]**, and in answer to our prayer the Lord appeared unto me and said, Arise, Abram, and take Lot with thee and all who follow after thee, for I have purposed to take thee out of Haran and to make of thee a minister to bear my name in a strange land which I will give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession when they hearken to my voice.

3 For I am the Lord thy God.

4 I dwell in the heavens; the earth is my footstool for I shall surely walk upon it when I come to redeem my people from their sins.

5 My name is Jehovah and I know the end from the beginning; therefore, my hand shall be over thee and I will make of thee a great nation and **I will bless thee above measure and make thy name great among all nations and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and priesthood, even the priesthood of the fathers after the Holy Order of God, unto all nations.**

[More of the Gospel of Abraham is revealed. Abraham was to raise up a seed which was to carry the line of Israel (Adam and Eve's chosen posterity), but through this line the whole world would be blessed. And that blessing would be the "Priesthood of the fathers after the Holy Order of God". This is more than Melchizedek Priesthood that they teach you about in church. This is the Priesthood you receive by virtue of your relationship with the Lord, after you follow the Doctrine of Christ, receive the three baptisms, and are adopted into the seed of Abraham. I hope this document shows you in many ways how Abraham is a type of the Father.]

6 **And I will bless all them, even as many as shall receive this gospel through thy name, for they shall be called after thy name, even the seed of Abram, as though they were the seed of thine own flesh, and they shall rise up and bless thee as their father.**

7 For I will bless them who bless thee and curse them who curse thee.

8 In thee, through the priesthood which thou barest, and in thy seed, **through thy priesthood which they shall bear which cometh down from the fathers, shall all the families of the earth be blessed with the blessings of the gospel which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.**

9 For I give thee this promise, that thy seed shall sprinkle all nations that **through them the right to this priesthood may encompass all mankind, that all may be brought into the covenant through obedience to the law and ordinances of the gospel.**

CHAPTER 57

NOW when the Lord had ceased speaking with me, I praised the Lord saying, Thy servant hath sought thee earnestly; now have I found thee.

[Abraham practically walked and talked with the Lord his entire life. Why did he just now confess that now he had found Him? There are multiple levels of meaning here. Each person who finally reaches

this level in their relationship with God will also come to the realize that that have now found God, because they will understand who and what God is, in a way that they never have before.]

2 Thou didst send thine angels to deliver me from death many times; shall I not do all things which the Lord my God requireth of me?

[Abraham rejoices in his deliverance from being sacrifices. God has abundantly proven His faithfulness to Abraham many times in the past. It's abundantly clear to Abraham that he is going forth and going to do the will of the Lord. There is no question in his mind.]

3 Blessed art thou, O Lord, who bestowest thy love without measure upon the righteous but hatest all iniquity.

4 But I have kept thy statutes to walk therein and have received thine ordinances unto myself, wherein thou hast blessed me with the Spirit of knowledge and truth.

5 For my part, I will love thee freely with all my heart and soul.

6 I will cleave to thine holy law to not turn aside therefrom in all thou hast commanded.

7 I have learned through the gift of thine Holy Spirit that no man is able to choose his own way nor direct his own steps for all such will fall into the pit.

8 In thine hand is the shaping of each man's soul which thou hast foreordained to conform to the image of thy Son.

9 Wherefore, I will embrace the Son and call upon God for mercy for evermore. Amen.

[This is a beautiful psalm of praise.]

CHAPTER 58

THEREFORE, I took Sarai and Lot and all my family and all Lot's family and all the souls who had joined us in Ur and in Haran who would come and we departed out of the land of Canaan.

2 But my father had departed not from his idolatry; wherefore, he remained in the land of Haran and Nahor also remained with some others who departed not from the truth of the living God.

[Isaac and Jacob would later choose their wives from the descendants of Nahor in order to keep the bloodline of Israel as pure as possible.]

CHAPTER 59

WHEN we had come into the land of Canaan, I built an altar in the plains of Moreh and offered sacrifice unto the Lord.

2 And the Lord appeared unto me and said This is the land which I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee forever.

3 I will make thy seed like the stars of heaven and I will give unto them for an inheritance all the land which belongeth unto the Canaanites for surely, I will destroy them from off the face for the land when their wickedness is full.

4 Wherefore, I praise the Lord for His mercy and we departed from that place and journeyed toward Bethel.

CHAPTER 60

AND when I reached Hebron, I tarried there for two years, but the famine again waxed great in the land.

2 hearing that there was no famine in Egypt, I determined to journey into that land, remembering the word of the Lord unto me in Ur that I should declare the mysteries of my God in the land of Egypt.

3 And, behold, the Lord blessed us on our journey that it was made light unto us and we journeyed until we reached the Kirmyon, one of the branches of the river of Egypt, where we rested from our journey for a season, for here the famine was not so severe.

4 But remembering the word of the Lord my God unto me, when we were recovered from our journey, I determined to move forward across the seven branches of the river of Egypt [**Nile delta**] into the heart of the country of the Egyptians.

CHAPTER 61

BUT on the night before I entered into Egypt, I dreamed a dream.

2 And behold, in my dream I saw a cedar and a palm tree and the branches of the palm tree were wrapped around the cedar.

3 Suddenly, a group of men approached, seeking to cut down the cedar and leave the palm tree to stand alone.

4 But the palm tree cried out saying, Cut not down the cedar for whosoever seeketh to fell it shall find the curse of God resting upon him.

5 So the men desisted and the cedar was spared by the act of the palm tree.

CHAPTER 62

WHEN the dream was ended, I awoke from my sleep and wondered at it.

2 Wherefore, I went before the Lord in prayer and besought him saying, O Lord, show me the interpretation of this dream which I have had this night.

[We dream throughout our sleep, but the dreams we are most likely to remember are those which we have just before waking up. If a dream seems important to you, write down as much as you can in outline form. Then, pray for an interpretation, and write down what you receive in full.]

3 And the Lord said unto me, Behold, Sarai thy wife is a beautiful woman to look upon above all the women of the earth.

4 Therefore, it shall come to pass that when the Egyptians shall see her, they will say, She is his wife, and they will seek to slay thee for the sake of obtaining thy wife.

5 Let Sarai thy wife, therefore, say unto them, He is my kinsman, and thy soul shall live.

6 For thou art the cedar, O Abram, and Sarai is the palm tree and this is the interpretation of the dream; for through the act of thy wife **[We discussed this earlier in the book.]**, thou shall be saved and the way will be opened for thee to preach the mysteries of godliness in the court of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, for these Egyptians are thy kindred of the seed of Eber **[great-grandson of Shem and the man whom the Hebrews are named after]**, and it is My will that the truths of the everlasting gospel should be brought to them.

CHAPTER 63

NOW I had heard while I dwelt in Haran that some of seed of Eber had entered into Egypt and driven the seed of Ham to the south and taken possession of the land.

2 But these followed not after the God of their father Eber, but worshipped idol gods, even as did my father Terah, but they followed not after the abominations of Nimrod.

3 Now these Hebrews were of the seed of Hadoram, the son of Joktan, the son of Eber.

4 And Joktan was the brother of Peleg.

5 And Eber was the son of Salah, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem.

6 Wherefore, the Lord had sent me to preach the gospel unto these who had departed from the god of their fathers.

CHAPTER 64

WHEREFORE, I awakened my wife Sarai and I said unto her, I have had a dream of the Lord.

2 Tell it to me, she said, that I may know what it is.

3 Therefore, I related unto her the dream and all that the Lord had said to me concerning it and I added, When the men of the land shall inquire of thee saying, Who is this who accompanieth thee, say unto them simply, She is my kinsman.

4 Thus shall my soul live and the Lord will use their love for thee as a means whereby the gospel shall be preached among them.

5 Fear not to do this thing for they will neither defile thee, contrary to thy covenants, nor slay me, but all shall come to pass to the glory of our God.

CHAPTER 65

SARAI, my wife, was fearful when she heard of the danger through which we must pass and wept that night before the Lord, but she placed her trust in Him and was comforted by His Holy Spirit.

2 The next day we moved on across the seven branches of the river and proceeded toward Foan where Pharaoh dwelt.

3 But I kept Sarai hidden until we reached Foan **[Zoan?]**, for it was in the home of Pharaoh that the Lord purpose to use her great beauty to open the heart of Pharaoh unto the work of God.

4 When we reached the city of Foan, three of Pharaoh's officers met us and I brought Sarai forth to sit at my right hand while I gave them audience.

5 And according to the word of the Lord, while I attempted to explain unto them our having come there because of the famine in the land of Canaan and that we sojourned among them, they kept bestowing compliments upon Sarai for her great beauty and wisdom and the luster of her countenance.

[Sarah was the center of attention. Abraham had to fear for his life. Sarah had to fear for her virtue.]

CHAPTER 66

WHEN the men departed from me, they went directly into the presence of Pharaoh and when they had eaten with him, he had good wine brought forth.

2 While they drank together, they began to speak unto him of what had transpired, but all they could speak of were the beauties of Sarai.

3 How beautiful is the woman Sarai, they said, who sitteth at Abram's right hand.

4 How comely is the shape of her face; how delicate and fine-spun are her tresses.

5 How beautiful her eyes. How delicate is her nose and the whole luster of her countenance.

6 How fair are her breasts and how comely with all is her complexion.

7 How comely, too, are her arms and how perfect her hands.

8 How pleasing are her hands to behold; how lovely her palms, how long and slender her fingers.

9 How comely are her feet. How well rounded her thighs.

10 None of the maidens and none of the brides that enter the bridechamber are fairer than she.

11 Her beauty is greater than all other women and she excels them all.

12 Moreover, along with all this beauty, she hath great wisdom and the workmanship of her hands is fair indeed.

[This is beginning to sound like a dirty novel.]

CHAPTER 67

WHEN he heard these words, Pharaoh lusted after Sarai and he sent his servants to fetch her to him.

2 Knowing it to be the will of the Lord, I let her go although mine heart was grieved within me.

[Abraham had to be willing to sacrifice his wife, just as he had to be willing to later sacrifice his son.]

3 When Pharaoh saw her, his lust grew within him, for he was overcome by her beauty and he took her into his household as his wife and sent men to slay me that I might not rise up to claim her.

4 But Sarai, seeing these things said unto Pharaoh, He is but my kinsman; wherefore, Pharaoh called back his men and my life was spared.

CHAPTER 68

BUT Lot and I and all our household spent that night in prayer before the Lord for Sarai that she might accomplish her mission and that she might not be defiled contrary to her covenants.

2 And I stood with mine arms stretched out toward heaven after the Holy Order of God and I said, Blessed art thou, O Lord the Most High God, Lord of all worlds and Lord and Ruler over all things.

3 I know that thou dost rule over all the kings of the earth, executing judgment upon them in righteousness even as thou didst save me from the evil designs of the mighty King Nimrod.

4 Now do I **complain** before thee concerning Pharaoh of Foan, king of Egypt, who hath violently abducted my wife Sarai from me.

5 Wreak justice upon him in my behalf and let me behold thine hand wax mighty against him and against all his household and let him not be able this night to defile my wife contrary to her covenants.

6 Let them come to know, O Lord, that thou art the Lord of all the kings of the earth and the Ruler of all men, for this cause did I suffer Sarai to go among them according to Thy counsel.

CHAPTER 69

AND God hearkened unto my prayer and withheld His spirit from the Egyptians that none of them were able to come at their wives that night.

2 In the morning, consternation reigned throughout the land of Egypt, for no man had been able to lie with his wife all that night.

[I wonder how this happened, and how the news spread that every man in Egypt has this problem.]

3 Pharaoh also was greatly perplexed, for although his lust toward Sarai had grown throughout the night, he had been unable to satisfy that lust because of the curse of God which rested upon him.

4 Therefore, he summoned all of his wise men and the physicians of his household, but none could heal him and all had suffered the same affliction.

[I wonder if there is a man who has not, at one time in his life, experienced great lust, but for whatever reason was unable to satisfy it.]

CHAPTER 70

THEN the Spirit of the Lord fell upon Sarai and she said, My lord, it is indeed a sad matter that this affection should be upon thee.

2 My kinsman Abram is a man full of wisdom and of the Spirit of our God.

3 Send for him, therefore, and he shall tell thee how to be delivered from these bonds that thou mayest freely take me to thyself.

4 Now this he said at the direction of the Lord our God and the Lord softened Pharaoh's heart that the hearkened unto her words and he sent Shulem, one of his chief ministers, unto my camp.

CHAPTER 71

WHEN Shulem arrived in camp, he was, according to my directions, led to the tent of Lot, and when he had entered the tent, he bowed before Lot and said, My lord Pharaoh and all the males of the land of Egypt have been cursed that they are unable to come at their wives.

2 But it hath been told Pharaoh by his handmaiden Sarai that her kinsman Abram is a man full of wisdom and of the Spirit of your God.

[Sarah was now taken by Pharaoh as his handmaiden. Will Abraham ever get her back? Of course, he will. He had a plan.]

3 Let him, therefore, come and lay his hands upon my lord Pharaoh and pray for him that he may be healed and live.

4 But Lot said to him, As long as his wife Sarai remains with the king, my uncle Abram will not be able to pray for him.

5 Be off thou and tell the king to release the woman to her husband.

6 Then he will pray for him and he will be healed.

CHAPTER 72

WHEN Shulem heard these words, he was amazed and he went straightway to the king.

2 My lord king, said he, This curse hath come on account of Sarai the wife of Abram.

3 Let Sarai be but restored to her husband Abram and this curse will be lifted from off all the males of Egypt.

4 Upon hearing these words, the king asked Sarai saying, Is this thing so?

5 Yea, my lord, she replied, and it is done that thou mightest behold the power of God.

6 For when thine heart lusted after me, thou shouldst have asked and not taken me by force.

7 But this is done that the glory of God might be revealed that thou shouldst turn from the worship of dumb idols to the worship of the true and living God.

CHAPTER 73

HEARING these words, Pharaoh summoned me to him and when I entered his presence he asked, What is this that hath been done?

2 For I have taken Sarai to wife while she was yet your wife and for this thing a curse hath fallen upon me and all males in the land of Egypt.

3 Therefore, pray for me that this curse may be removed from us.

4 According to Pharaoh's request, I laid mine hands upon him and prayed over him and he and all the males of Egypt were healed.

[Sarah must have been inspired. There is no way she would have been able to communicate with Abraham and Lot.]

CHAPTER 74

WHEN the king had been blessed, he was that he had recovered and he praised the Lord for his recovery.

2 Wherefore, I took him into his garden and baptized him in the name of the Lord and all his household with him.

3 And when I had blessed him again, Sarai came before him and he knew that he had been healed for the Spirit of God fell upon him with this testimony and the witness thereof was sure.

CHAPTER 75

THEN Pharaoh arose and praised the Lord and proclaimed to all his people that they should worship the Most High God who had healed them.

2 And he desired to enter into a covenant of eternal brotherhood with me that I should be his father and he should be my son.

[Recall that descendants of Eber had taken over Egypt, and presumably one of them became Pharaoh. But Abraham was sent to them because they were descendants of Noah and Shem, and therefore of the blood of Israel. It was for this reason that the Lord sent Abraham and all his company to Egypt in the first place. This conflicts with the Book of Abraham, which said that the Egyptians were descendants of Ham.]

3 Wherefore, I said unto Pharaoh, Put forth thine hand upon my thigh **[The original account in Genesis has Abraham making his servant Eliezer place his hand under his thigh, and I suspect this is a euphemism for placing his hand someplace else, such as a man's genitals and swearing to the man AND his posterity.]** and I will make thee swear before the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, **that thou shalt be true to me and thine heirs to mine heirs forever, and I shall receive thee unto myself to be my son and brother to inherit all the blessings of mine house and to bear my priesthood forever.**

[This sounds like a covenant only a God could make. God said He put his name upon Abraham. This sounds like an oath we make with God, through Abraham, acting as proxy. My purpose in these comments is to tell you my thoughts and stimulate to bring your questions to the Lord. Ask the Lord about it.]

4 Wherefore, Pharaoh put his hand upon my thigh and swore to me according to this oath.

5 And when he had sworn, Lot sealed him mine that he should be my son in time and eternity and Pharaoh rejoiced therein.

[This sounds like an ordinance.]

CHAPTER 76

AND the king clothed me in his own robes and seated me upon his throne, placing his own crown upon my head and his scepter in mine hand.

2 And I did teach him and his people in all the mysteries of godliness from first to last.

3 For Pharaoh did introduce me into the temple which had been built by the fathers, commenced by Father Seth and completed by Father Shem after the great flood and therein I did officiate in the rites and ordinances of the house of the Lord.

[There were ordinances. There was instruction. This was a school of the prophets, taught by a prophet of God, in the temple. Can you picture the temple in Zion, during the Millennium, where ordinances will be revealed, of which we currently have no knowledge, but which involve us actually being sealed, not to a proxy, but to the actual Eternal Father, sealed by Christ, and all of this in preparation for the Celestialization of the earth? Think about it, then ask the Lord if there is something he'd like to reveal to you. Maybe you aren't ready for any of this. If you aren't, that's OK. Just keep it in the back of your mind.]

4 And Pharaoh made all matters right with Sarai, and he blessed her with the outpouring of his spirit and she was blessed in his presence.

5 And he gave unto her Hagar, his own daughter, also, to be her companion and to Hagar he gave many gifts.

[This would mean that Hagar and her son Ishmael, were also members of the chosen seed.]

6 And I was seven years in the land of Egypt teaching the gospel and administering unto Pharaoh and his household and all the Egyptians the blessings, rites, and ordinances of the gospel with the power thereof.

7 And I established among them the order of the Fathers and the priesthood thereof until the name of Jehovah was glorified throughout the land of Egypt.

8 And I taught the people the nature of the heavens and of the earth and the plan of salvation and the blessings of the Lord unto those who serve him in purity of heart and to believe on the Son of God who should come to make an atonement for their sins.

[In the "restoration of all things", the "gathering of all things into one". when Elijah comes to "reveal the Priesthood" and "plant in the heart of the children the covenants made to the Fathers", all this will be had again upon the earth, on or about the time of Zion.]

9 And so great was the power of God among us that in time all of the Egyptians had turned from their idolatry to the worship of the true God and I and my people had cause to rejoice in the fruits of labors.

CHAPTER 77

AT the end of seven years, the Lord visited me and he said unto me, Blessed art thou, Abram, servant of the Most High, for thy joy shall be great in my mansion **[dwelling place]** with this multitude which thou hast brought unto me; wherefore, thy name shall no more be called Abram but Abraham shalt thou be called, which is by interpretation, Father of a Multitude.

2 Moreover, thy wife Sarai shall no longer be called by that name, but Sarah shall she be called, which signifieth a Queen.

3 For Sarah have I chosen and appointed to be thy queen of queens for from her shall issue the promised seed, even him who shall be thine heir.

[These are the actual Hebrew meanings of their names, when the letter “H”, or the Hebrew “Heh” was added to their names.]

4 Behold, the day cometh when the seed of Ham shall again rule in this land and at that day thy seed shall be in bondage to them, but I will raise up a prince **[Prophecy of Moses]** from among the Egyptians who shall lead them out of bondage and they shall inherit the land of Canaan, even that land which I have promised unto thee and to thy seed after thee for an everlasting inheritance.

5 Moreover, from the loins of thine heir shall proceed the Messiah, even the Son of God **[Prophecy of Christ]**, who shall walk upon the earth ministering to the poor and lowly, who shall be lifted up that the price might be paid for the original sin of Adam and for the sins of all mankind, that all who will believe **[exercise faith]** on His name and receive His ordinances and keep His commandments should not perish but inherit everlasting life.

6 Moreover, in the last days I will raise up out of the loins of thine heir a choice seer through whom the **fullness of my gospel shall be restored to the earth and all things shall be restored as in the beginning.**

7 For upon him shall rest the priesthood of his fathers and he shall commence the organization of that holy order which was in the beginning of the world which shall be consummated before the Son of God shall walk again upon the earth.

[This is hinting about what I mentioned earlier. Joseph Smith was martyred before this was completed. It was delayed because the saints weren't ready for it. God often gives us blessings which we aren't prepared to receive, to show us clearly where and how we need to grow. Some believe that he will return to finish this unfinished work.]

8 These promises are thine, my son, and I say unto thee, Thou shalt be exalted and dwell with me in the mansion of my Father.

9 Now take thy people and return into the land of Canaan, for there have I a mission for thee and there shall the promises come to pass in thy behalf.

[On to Canaan for the next chapter in this remarkable life.]

CHAPTER 78

WHEN I had received this word of the Lord and He had departed from me, I went unto Pharaoh and told him that I must depart from his realm as the Lord had a work for me to do in the land of Canaan.

2 Though he was loathe to see me go, Pharaoh bowed to the will of God and appointed men from his own bodyguard to escort me to the borders of Egypt and he gave me gifts of cattle and silver and gold and fine cloth and precious jewels of every kind.

CHAPTER 79

SO I went up out of Egypt and Lot accompanied me who had taken three wives while in Egypt, namely, Jennifer, daughter of Eliezer of Damascus, Deborah, daughter of Kumen who had come out of the city of Ur, and Asterah, daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

CHAPTER 80

TRAVELING slowly and stopping often to camp upon our way, we eventually reached Bethel, where yet stood and altar that I had built there at the first.

2 I restored it to its perfect form and offered sacrifices thereon to the Most High God.

3 And I called there upon the name of the Lord of all worlds and offered praise to the name of God and blessed god and gave thanks before Him for all the possessions bestowed upon us and for the many souls we had won in Egypt and for having brought us back safely from that land.

CHAPTER 81

NOW after our departure from Egypt, a faction arose among our people upon seeing the great wealth which Pharaoh had entrusted to us, for they desired property which they could call their own.

2 Lot also was among them, which thing grieved me greatly, but seeing they would not be reconciled, we gave unto them a portion of the common property and they departed from us under Lot's direction and settled in the Valley of the Jordan River.

3 There they went from place to place as their flocks needed pasture until they reached the city of Sodom where they mingled with the inhabitants and became one with them.

4 Lot also built a house in Sodom and settled there, but of all that company that went out from us, only Lot maintained his integrity and did not violate the covenants of his priesthood nor bow to heathen idol gods.

5 Nevertheless, Lot did not walk perfectly in the way of the Fathers for he dwelt not among the people of God but built his own house and he coveted his own property that he should govern it rather than holding all things common with the saints.

6 Nevertheless, Lot did continue to serve the Lord and the Lord loved him and his family and his property grew very large.

7 But I was grieved in my heart that Lot had parted from me for he had stood at my right hand and had been instructed in a better way.

CHAPTER 82

MEANWHILE, I with my people dwelt in Bethel where we did worship the Lord our God after the Order of the Ancients and did strive diligently to establish the Holy Order of God among us in ever increasing perfection.

2 Wherefore, we did banish from among us all contention, all covetousness, all selfishness, and we were of one heart and of one mind and dedicated in all our service unto the Lord and held all things common, for no man called anything his own **[Legally, the property may belong to the man, but in his heart, he has consecrated it to the Lord.]**

[Abraham wanted to build a Zion society and, thereby, bring his entire people into the Presence of God, as Enoch had done before him, and as Melchizedek was about to do, but cracks began to form as people began to covet their own property. There is nothing wrong with owning property and being a steward over earthly things, but what do you value most? Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.]

CHAPTER 83

ONE night God appeared to me in a vision and said, Go up to the top of Hazor and lift up thine eyes and gaze eastward and westward and southward and northward and behold all this land for, behold, unto thee and to thy seed after thee shall I give it for an everlasting inheritance.

2 The next day I ascended Hazor as the Lord had commanded me and I gazed upon all the land from the river of Egypt unto Lebanon and Shenir, from the Great Sea unto Hauran, the whole area of Seir as far as Kadish, the whole of the great wilderness which lieth east of the Hauran and the region of Shenir as far as the Euphrates.

[So, from the Nile to the Euphrates.]

3 And as I beheld the land, the Lord my God spake in mine heart, saying, Blessed Abraham, I have chosen thee to stand at the head of a multitude.

4 Wherefore, unto thee and to thy seed after thee I will give this land, even all that thine eye beholdeth, that ye may possess it forever.

5 And I shall multiply thy seed like the dust of the earth, for even as no man can count the dust of the earth, so shall they seed be without number.

6 Rise up, now, and compass this land.

7 Behold the length of it and the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee and to thy seed after thee forever.

CHAPTER 84

EVEN so, I, Abraham, descended from the high place and set out to behold all the land.

2 I commenced at the river of Egypt and came to the shore of the lake beside which I traveled until I reached the mountain of the ox.

3 Thence, I turned from the great lake **[Now the Dead Sea, but legend has it that it wasn't salty until Sodom was destroyed.]** which is by Sodom and walked across the breadth of the land until I reached Euphrates.

4 Thence, I journeyed even unto the Red Sea which I followed unto its head.

5 Thence, I went onward to the river of Egypt again, having compassed the whole land according to the command of the Lord.

6 When I had completed my journey, I bowed down and praised the Lord and returned safely unto my family where I found everyone well.

CHAPTER 85

NOT many days thence, under the direction of the Lord, I departed from Bethel and settled in the plains of Mamre on the northeast of Hebron and there I built an altar and offered an offering unto the Most High God and dedicated that land unto the Lord.

2 And I held a great feast unto the Lord for the time of the Passover **[Interesting that they would hold Passover before the time of Moses.]** had come and together with all the men of mine household, Invited Mamre, Aneram, and Eshcol, my friends who were wanderers in the land as we were and who had joined the believers in the Most High God, into the Solemn Assembly.

[The original Hebrew word for solemn assembly ('ăsar) indicates a day of restraint (from work). The root of the word indicates keeping a tradition, or keeping something close, or holding it to your heart.]

3 And after this all my people ate and drank together with me before the Lord.

CHAPTER 86

AT this feast, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me and laying aside my garments, I danced before the Lord and sang unto the Lord a new song, saying, Blessed are Thou, O Lord, who hast given unto man knowledge of Thy ways that he might understand Thy truths and see Thine abundant mercies.

2 Blessed art Thou, O God, who art full of compassion and grace, for the greatness of Thy power, the abundance of Thy truth, the profusion of Thy mercies over all Thy works.

3 Rejoice the soul of Thy servant in Thy truth and through Thy righteousness make me clean before Thee.

4 Blessed art Thou, O Lord, for Thou has placed in the mouth of Thy servant the sacred words of power that I might stand as Thy minister continually that I may confer Thy grace upon Thy children and that I myself may return to Thy presence.

[This might seem foreign to us today, but the Spirit can inspire us to dance and move about, and give unto us words of praise and power. Be open and believing.]

CHAPTER 87

SARAH also rose up, full of the Holy Ghost, and danced and sang before the Lord.

2 And this is the song of Sarah: In Thee, O Lord, will my soul be raised up for Thou hast bestowed upon me Thy grace whereby I am restored to Thy presence for I have entered into thine holy house and received the sacred rites of Thy presence.

3 Surely in my tent at night I will sing songs of joy unto the Lord as I am overshadowed by the priesthood and lifted up in the foreshadowing of eternity.

4 Surely in receiving Thy Spirit through the overshadowing of the priesthood, I have received salvation.

5 Wherefore, in the midst of Thy people, those who reverence Thine holy name, I will praise Thee and glorify Thy name forever.

[Sarah was also moved by the Spirit and joined in the praise. I think we all know what she is talking about. Have you ever been so moved by the Spirit, that you wanted to get up and sing and dance? Why didn't you? We can spend our own holy time growing close to the Lord, praising Him, and singing and speaking in tongues, and be caught up into His Presence, and see and hear things which are unspeakable.]

CHAPTER 88

MY wife Kadar also arose and proceeded to dance and sing before the Lord.

2 And her son was: Bless the Lord, O my soul; exalt His name among the people.

3 I will praise Thee, O Lord, upon my bed when the wellsprings of my joy are opened up.

4 I will praise Thee at all times and seasons.

5 When the sun riseth upon the earth, I will praise Thine holy name.

6 When in its ordered course, day reacheth its turning point at the meridian, I shall not fail to praise Thee.

7 Again in the evening when the daylight departeth, I will marvel at Thy wonders and glorify Thy name.

CHAPTER 89

THEN rose up my wife Judith who danced and sang, saying, Praise the Lord who hath shown me the wonders of His ways.

2 For as I lay upon my bed enwrapped in the ecstasies of the Holy Spirit, when the Spirit rushed into me, I saw the vision of the Almighty and heard that which is unlawful to be spoken.

3 Yea, O Lord, Thou hast visited me and I have heard Thy wondrous secret and I know that it is true. Through Thine Holy Spirit, through the rites of Thine holy priesthood, through the glorious inner vision to which Thou didst open my mind in the moment of passion, Thou has caused a spring of knowledge to well up within me, a fountain of strength and power, of loving kindness and glory in my God.

4 Thou has put an end to the darkness of the world in me and the splendor of Thy glory hath become in me an eternal light.

5 Wherefore, I will praise Thy name forever and give myself unto Thee.

CHAPTER 90

WHEN Judith had finished her song, all the congregation, being filled with the Holy Ghost, arose to their feet and began to dance and sing and praise the Lord and to prophecy in His name.

2 Some saw holy angels in our midst and others saw the heavens opened and beheld God seated upon His throne and all were filled with His Spirit and shouted praises to the Lord in joyousness until dawn.

3 Then we all rose up before the Lord and praised His name for this great outpouring and worshipped Him all that day.

4 And we rejoiced in the grace of the Lord our God.

[I understand through the Spirit what is happening here, and that what they are talking about is possible. I can't explain it. There no words. You need to understand it for yourself. I hope the words of the text inspire you to seek for a correct understanding of what is being taught here. You need to break out of your traditions and have the Spirit show you.]

CHAPTER 91

PREVIOUS to this time, Amraphel, son of Nimrod, king of Shinar, Chederlaomer, king of Elam, Arioch, king of Capadocia, and Tidal, king of Goyim in Mesopotamia, had waged war against Bera, king of Sodom, Birsha, king of Gomorrah, Shinah, king of Admah, Shemeber, king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela.

2 They assembled for combat in the vale of Siddim and the king of Shinar and his royal allies overcame the king of Sodom and his confederates and imposed tribute upon them.

3 For twelve years they paid their tribute to the king of Shinar, but in the thirteenth year they revolted against him.

4 In the fourteenth year the king of Shinar led forth all his allies and they went up along the way of the wilderness, attacking and plundering all who were confederate with the king of Sodom.

5 But the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela came forth to battle and met Amraphel and his allies in the vale of Siddim.

6 However, Amraphel and his allies prevailed against them and Bera, king of Sodom turned and fled and Birsha, king of Gomorrah fell into the slime pits which were in the vale of Siddim and perished there.

7 The remainder of the kings fled unto the mountain which was called Hanabal and tarried there in great fear.

[There were four kings in battle against another five kings. I explained this in the Genesis version.]

CHAPTER 93

[The document where I obtained this contained many spelling and typographical errors, which I have tried to locate and fix. However, the numbering system of the chapters left out Chapter 92, and I decided to keep the original numbering.]

BUT one of Lot's servants who dwelt in his house escaped and came to me in Hebron and told me that Lot, my brother's son, had been taken with all his possessions, but that he yet lived.

2 He showed me, moreover, the route which the kings had taken toward the land of Damascus.

3 When I heard this news, mine heart melted within me for Lot who had stood at my right hand had been as a brother to me in the place of my brother Haran, who had been slain in the Land of Shinar.

4 Oh, that Lot had stayed among the body of saints of the Most High God, I thought, and not go off to possess his own property apart.

5 Then these circumstances would never have befallen him that he should be in the hands of Amraphel, son of Nimrod, king of Shinar and his host.

6 But as I thus mourned over Lot, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Up, arouse thee, O Abraham. Take three hundred and eighty of the young men of the strength of thine house and also thy friends Aneram, Eshcol, and Mamre each with one hundred and five of the strength of his house and also Eliezer of Damascus who is with thee in the tent and pursue after Amraphel, son of Nimrod, king of Shinar, for truly I shall deliver his hosts into your hands.

[Even though Lot broke with the original community and strayed from the Lord, Abraham still came to his rescue.]

CHAPTER 94

WHEREFORE, we did according to all that the Lord had commanded me, having all seven hundreds of men and we pursued after them even unto the valley of Dan where we found them encamped.

2 And falling upon them by night from all four directions, we commenced the work of death and continued wreaking slaughter among them and discomforting them all that night.

3 And with the rising of the sun, they fled from before us until they reached Hobah which is situated to the left of Damascus where we did again overtake them and conquer them.

4 There we did strip them of all that they had taken as plunder and loot and likewise of all their won goods.

5 Lot also and his family we rescued from their hands and restoring to him all his possessions and all that they had taken from him as spoil, we restored him to his home in peace.

[Even though Abraham was against private ownership and coveting one's own property, he assisted Lot to recover his property.]

CHAPTER 95

WHEN the king of Sodom heard that I had returned from the conquest of Amraphel, son of Nimrod, king of Shinar, he came forth to meet me at the valley of Shaveh which is west of the city of Shalom where Noah and Melchizedek dwelt.

2 And Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine from the city of Shalom unto the valley of Shaveh where we were encamped.

3 And he being the high priest after the Order of the Most High God, brake the bread and blessed it and he blessed the wine also and he distributed them unto me and those who were with me, and we partook and were filled.

4 And Melchizedek lifted up his hands to heaven and blessed me, and said, Blessed Abraham, thou art a man of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and of earth, wherefore, his name and priesthood shall not depart from thee and thy seed after thee while the earth shall stand and even in eternity shall it remain with thee.

5 And blessed is the name of the Most High God and almighty His power, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand.

6 And I, Abraham, gave into the hand of Melchizedek, tithes of all I had taken, for he was the presiding high priest after the Order of the Most High God, the first of the fathers unto me, and he reigned under his father Noah.

[We covered this earlier.]

CHAPTER 96

AND when the king of Sodom had come unto me, he said unto me, My lord Abraham, give me the persons who are not thine but who are with thee whom thou hast rescued from the hand of Amraphel, son of Nimrod, king of Shinar, but let all the property be left with thee.

2 But I said unto him, This day do I, Abraham, lift up mine hand before the Most High God, before His holy angels and before these witnesses who are with us and declare that I will not take even so much as

a thread or a shoe's latchet which is not mine, lest thou shouldst say that all Abraham's wealth cometh really from thy possession.

3 Only that which the young men who are with me have eaten and that which Aneram, Eshcol, and Mamre, these three stalwarts who went with me, have received as their share shall be excepted of all that I took from Amraphel, son of Nimrod, king of Shinar that was thine.

4 The rest I return freely unto thee.

5 Now go thy way in peace.

6 Thereupon, I returned all the possessions and all the spoil and gave them unto the king of Sodom and I released all the captives and sent them away rejoicing.

[As mentioned before, Abraham paid tithing to Melchizedek, and then returned to the king all the property he had taken, save only enough to provide for his troops. This was generous, considering the selfishness of the people of Sodom. Nevertheless, Abraham returned their property to them.]

CHAPTER 97

AND when I had done this, Melchizedek again lifted up his voice and blessed me saying, Blessed art thou, Abraham, for the Most High God shall visit thee and shall bestow upon thee riches and honor and lands for an everlasting possession because thou hast been true and faithful to the covenants which thou hast entered before Him.

2 Wherefore, thou shalt continue to increase, worlds without end, and the glory of the Lord shall never depart from thee. The blessings of thy Fathers shall rest upon thee and thou shalt stand at the head and in thee and in thy seed after thee, those who shall bear thy priesthood, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

[Abraham could not help himself from prospering. The more generous he was, the more he was blessed. God uses generous people like Abraham, instead of using selfish people to channel His blessings to the world.]

CHAPTER 98

THEREWITH, I departed from Melchizedek, rejoicing in his blessing, **for he was a man of faith who wrought righteousness and when a child he feared God and by his faith** he stopped the mouths of lions and quenched the violence of fire when those of the evil combination sought to destroy him from off the face of the earth.

[Please note: Melchizedek had faith and wrought miracles, even before he held Priesthood. Miracles are signs of faith, not privileges of the Priesthood. Thus, even women can work miracles because of their faith.]

2 **Therefore, having been approved of God, he was ordained an high priest** after the order of the covenant which God made with Enoch which is after the order of the Firstborn, even our Father Adam.

3 For this holy order came not by man nor the will of man, neither by father nor mother, neither by beginning of days nor end of years, but of God.

4 For it was established in the beginning of the earth by the Ancients of days, wherefore it is called the Order of the Ancients, and it was delivered unto men from the beginning by the calling of God's own voice according to His own will through the voice of His Priesthood **[This contradicts JST Gen. 14:29, which says this Priesthood is conferred by God's own voice, directly, not through the voice of His Priesthood.]**, unto as many as believed on His name and were faithful until they had obtained.

CHAPTER 99

BEHOLD, these could transcend the veil, according to the will of God, and commune with the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn in heaven and many were caught up to be with them.

2 For God had sworn unto Enoch and unto his seed with an oath by Himself the every one being ordained after this order and calling should have power by faith to break mountains, to divide the seas, to dry up waters, to turn them out of their course, to put at defiance the armies of nations, to divide the earth, to break every band, to stand in the presence of God, to do all things according to His will according to His command, subdue principalities and powers, and this by the will of the Son of the Only Begotten of the Father which was from before the foundation of the world.

3 And men having this faith and coming up unto this order of God could be translated and taken up into heaven.

CHAPTER 100

NOW Melchizedek was a priest after this order which is the Holy Order of God; therefore, he obtained peace in Shalom and was called the prince of peace.

2 And his people wrought righteousness and obtained heaven for they sought for the city of Enoch which God had before taken, separating it from the earth, having reserved it unto the latter days or the end of the world.

3 For God hath said and sworn with an oath that the heavens and the earth should come together again and the sons of God be tried even by fire.

4 And thus Melchizedek, having established righteousness, was called the king of heaven by his people or, in other words, the king of peace.

5 And they communed with those in the city of Enoch and in the city of Peleg and had access to them and were blessed all their days.

CHAPTER 101

AFTER these things God appeared to me in a vision and he said unto me, Behold Abraham, it is ten full years since thou camest into this land from Haran.

2 Two years didst thou remain then in the land, seven years wast thou in Egypt and one year hath passed since thy return from Egypt.

3 Now, number all that thou hast and see how it hath increased to double that which went out with thee in the day thou camest forth from Haran.

4 Therefore, fear not, for I am with thee and will be thine help and the source of thy strength.

5 I will be thy shield and thine exceeding great reward and thy wealth and thy possessions shall I increase exceedingly.

CHAPTER 102

AND I said unto Him, My Lord God, truly my wealth and my possessions have increased but, behold, Eliezer of Damascus standeth as mine heir, whereas, prior to my departure from the city of Shalom, Father Shem said unto, Eliezer is a good and righteous man and he shall be greatly blessed in time and in eternity, but he shall not be thine heir, for another shall be thine heir who shall come forth from the womb of thy wife whom thou shalt take in the house of thy father for she is ordained to be thy queen of queens and the mother of thine heir.

2 Wherefore then doth Sarah remain barren, having neither son nor daughter?

3 Nay, replied God, fear not, for none shall be thine heir save he that shall come forth from the womb of thy wife Sarah for she is ordained to be thy queen of queens and the mother of thine heir.

4 Therefore is her name called Sarah.

[Despite being together all these years, Sarah was still barren, but the promised seed was still to come through her. And the promised prosperity shall yet build Zion, though we have yet to see the fruits of either. As the life of Abraham and Isaac is a living type and shadow of what is to come, could not the life of Sarah, also be a living illustration of prophecy?]

Isa 54:1 Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

Isa 54:2 Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes;

Isa 54:3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

Isa 54:4 Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

Isa 54:5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Isa 54:6 For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

Isa 54:7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

Isa 54:8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

CHAPTER 103

AND the Lord took me out of the camp and He said, Look now toward heaven and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them.

2 And He said unto me, So shall thy seed be.

3 And I said unto him, Lord God, how wilt thou give me this land for an everlasting inheritance?

4 And the Lord replied, Though thou wast dead, yet am I not able to give it thee?

5 And if thou shalt die, yet thou shalt possess it, for the day cometh that the Son of Man shall live but how can he live if he be not dead?

6 He must first be quickened.

[Feel free to draw your own conclusions, but I believe God was talking about the Son of Man who was then upon the earth, would die, and then be quickened to return and live again to perform His formal earthly ministry. Who could this man be? Melchizedek?]

7 And the Lord touched the eyes of mine understanding that they were opened and I beheld the days of the Son of Man, for I beheld Him ministering unto my seed, teaching them the law of God, healing the sick, casting out devils and doing many wonderful works.

8 I saw also the Son of Man lifted up upon the cross for the sins of men; wherefore I wept for the wickedness of man which could crucify the Son of God.

9 Nevertheless, I saw also that He should rise again from the dead, wherein mine heart did rejoice and my soul found rest in the knowledge that though I should die, yet again in the flesh should I see God and dwell in the land of mine inheritance.

10 For I saw also the days of the coming of the Son of Man upon the earth in the last days when He shall descend with ten thousands of His saints according to the prophecy of Father Enoch **[This prophecy is in the Book of Enoch and in the Book of Jude.]** and the earth shall be cleansed by fire.

11 Then all shall rise to stand before God, both the just and the unjust, to be judged according to their works.

CHAPTER 104

AND the Lord said unto me, I, the Lord thy God, saved thee from the fire in the land of Shinar and from the hand of the wicked priest and from all the evil intentions of king Nimrod and I brought thee into this land that I might give it to thee as an everlasting inheritance.

2 Now, I knew that the word of the Lord was true. Nevertheless, I desired to know more of this inheritance which the Lord had provided me.

[When the Lord promises us something or teaches us something, He loves it when we inquire to know more of Him. It shows Him that we have faith and are acting on it.]

3 Wherefore, I said, Lord, how shall it be that I shall inherit this land wherein I am a stranger?

4 And the Lord said unto me, Take me an heifer of three years old and a she goat of three years old and a ram of three years old and a turtle dove and a young pigeon.

5 Divide each of these in the midst and lay one half on each side of an open place, except the birds thou shalt not divide but lay one on each side.

6 Wherefore, I went and did according to all that the Lord had commanded me and when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, I drove them away.

7 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon me and lo, in the sleep was a great horror of darkness.

8 And I cried unto the Lord, saying, O Lord, what meaneth this great horror of darkness?

9 And the Lord said unto me, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land which shall not be theirs and shall be in bondage to strangers, even to the seed of Ham who shall again overrun the land of Egypt.

10 And thy seed shall be afflicted and serve them four hundred years.

11 But at that time, I shall judge the seed of Ham and thy seed shall come up out of the land of Egypt with great substance.

12 And as for thee, thou shalt die and go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

13 But in the fourth generation thy seed shall come higher again for the iniquity of the Canaanites is not yet full.

CHAPTER 105

AND it came to pass that when the sun was down and it was dark, behold, two personages passed between those pieces which I had divided.

2 And their countenance was as fire such that I could hardly look upon them and the one said to me, Behold, of thy seed shall the Messiah come who shall redeem all those who believe on His name and walk in His footsteps.

3 Wherefore, repent and call upon the name of the Son all thy days that in the end thou mayest dwell with me in my mansion.

CHAPTER 106

NOW when Sarah saw that she bare neither son nor daughter, it grieved her heart.

2 And she said unto me, Take therefore Hagar, daughter of Pharaoh, to be thy wife, for she is a woman now.

3 And let her come into my bed and let her womb be unto thee in the place of mine to raise up seed unto thee.

4 Hagar also was willing to enter this covenant and it was according to the voice of the Spirit of God; wherefore, Sarah gave Hagar to be my wife and Sarah and Hagar were as one wife unto that the seed of Hagar might be also the seed of Sarah.

[Notice that Abraham did not take Hagar to wife, nor did God command or justify Abraham in taking Hagar to wife. This was Sarah's decision.]

5 For Hagar had been raised by Sarah and been taught by her and had followed Sarah in ways of righteousness.

[Hagar was a righteous woman and was a daughter of the then current Pharaoh, who was a descendant of Eber.]

CHAPTER 107

AND when I came into unto Hagar in Sarah's bed, she conceived.

2 And when Hagar saw that she had conceived, she rejoiced greatly and began to be lifted up in pride and to despise Sarah and she taunted Sarah, saying, Surely, I am better than thee for in all the years thy lord hath lain with thee, thou hast not conceived, but lo, in this short time, I have conceived from the seed of my lord.

3 And Sarah was grieved in her heart and she said unto me, Surely Hagar hath wronged me and thou also hast contributed to her wrong, for she hath spoken spitefully to me in thy presence, yet thou hast done nothing to correct her.

4 But I replied to Sarah, Surely Hagar is thy child for thou hast instructed her from her youth.

5 Correct her, therefore, as seemeth thee good.

[Hagar thought she was better than Sarah, because she conceived, but Sarah was barren. Sarah complained to Abraham, but Abraham said it was entirely in Sarah's hands.]

CHAPTER 108

HOWEVER, when Sarah attempted to correct Hagar, Hagar grew angry and determined to return unto her father's people; wherefore, she departed into the wilderness.

2 But an angel of the Lord met her by a well where she stopped to rest and he said unto her, Hagar, daughter of Sarah, who gave thee unto her husband Abraham and took thee into her own bed that thou mightest raise up seed unto her, why art thou thus fleeing into the wilderness from the camp of Abraham?

3 And Hagar replied, I am returning to the land of my father for it grieveth me to be bound to Sarah.

4 And the angel of the Lord said to her, Return unto Sarah and be subject unto her for she is given to thee to be a mother unto thee and this seed is hers as well as yours.

5 The Lord will multiply thy seed exceedingly so that it shall not be numbered for multitude and thou shalt bear a son and shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord hath heard thy prayers and answered them.

6 He will be a man of the desert and a man of war; nevertheless, many shall join themselves unto him and his people shall be great.

CHAPTER 109

HAGAR replied, What shall I say is the name of him who beareth these glad tidings.

2 And the angel replied, Beer-la-hai-roi, **[well of the living one seeing me]** for know thou that God seest thee in all places whithersoever thou shalt be.

3 And Hagar said, I know that God seest me, for He hath this day sent His angel to minister unto me.

4 Wherefore, Hagar returned unto the tent of Sarah and at the appointed time she bare unto me a son and I called his name Ishmael, according to the word of the angel.

5 And I was four score and six years **[86]** old when Hagar bare Ishmael unto me.

CHAPTER 110

AT the end of thirteen years, the Lord appeared unto me and He said unto me, Abraham, because thou hast been faithful in all things unto me from the time thou wast three years old, and behold, now thou

art ninety and nine, therefore, **I will establish my covenant with thee for with thee I shall commence a new dispensation of the gospel that from this time forth all those who would be sealed into me must be sealed into thee.**

[Abraham was a proxy for God.]

2 Wherefore, **I will send Noah unto thee in the tabernacle, and he will bestow upon thee the keys of this priesthood, for the city of Melchizedek will I take up from off the earth and there will be a new beginning in thee.**

[We begin a lengthy, doctrinal chapter. This might have been what Joseph Smith had in mind or what he was trying to accomplish, while acting as a proxy for Christ in sealing people to himself.]

There are three kinds of sealing authority. **The first is given at the founding of a dispensation. As a dispensation head, the first form of sealing power is given to establish a covenant for the benefit of those living then and thereafter.** Joseph Smith was given a dispensation. **This first form of priesthood is only given to men by God.**

The second is embedded in authoritative ordinance. All dispensations must follow the covenant giver's ordinances or **preserve the ordinance as established through the dispensation head. For as long as the ordinances are kept intact, the covenant is in effect.** The condition of being faithful remains part of the ordinance, and the ordinance must be practiced faithfully and cannot be changed, or it is broken. **If these conditions are met, the covenant is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, and the blessing is secured.**

This second form of sealing power is not dependent on the presence of a dispensation head and can be a limited sealing authority. This form of sealing is conditional. God is not bound by anything that is one iota different from His word. It can be passed from man-to-man, from generation to generation, and remains in full force and effect for so long as the covenant is unbroken.

The third kind of sealing power goes beyond either of the first two. It is given only in rare circumstances and for highly specific purposes. With it, man has the **authority to control the elements.** This was held by Christ and given to Enoch, Melchizedek, Moses, and Elijah. This was the reason Christ declared that no man could take His life, but He could both lay it down and take it up again. **Every individual with this authority must choose to give their lives up willingly. Their lives cannot be taken.** This third form is extremely rare and involves an extraordinary combination of mortality and immortality, in which God has faith in a man. All those given this third form of sealing power have only one objective: saving the souls of men.

Denver Snuffer, *Preserving the Restoration*, 200–204.

3 For I will greatly multiply thy seed and I will make them my ministers that through thy priesthood all the peoples of the earth shall be blessed.

4 Therefore, from this time forth shall every male child among you be circumcised in that his foreskin shall be opened in token of the opening of his heart to the light of the gospel. **[The sign of the dispensational covenant.]**

5 And on the eighth day shall ye do it that ye may remember that on the eighth day they shall be baptized that the blessing of the gospel may come upon them.

6 **This is according to the covenant I made with Adam in the garden Eden, but I instructed Noah and Shem not to administer this covenant unto thee that thou mightest receive it in token of this new covenant which I make with thee.**

7 **Although I gave these ordinances in the beginning unto Adam, yet the sons of men have continually gone astray from my precepts and have not kept mine ordinances which I gave unto their fathers.**

8 They have neglected the ordinance of baptism which I commanded unto them in token of the burial of the natural man and have ceased to receive the anointing whereby they become kings and priests unto me.

9 Yea, they have turned from my commandments and changed mine ordinances and have replaced baptism with the washing of children which they call baptism.

10 But, behold, this is no baptism, for I will atone for the fall of Adam; wherefore, little children are innocent until they reach the age of accountability.

11 But the sons of men have rejected mine atonement wherein I will offer Mine Only Begotten Son for the sins of the world, for they say that the blood of righteous Abel was shed for sins, thereby rejecting Me as their Savior.

12 But thou hast upheld mine ordinances. Therefore, thy seed shall sprinkle **[astound, “So shall he yet astound many nations, kings shutting their mouths at him—” Isaiah, 52:15 Gileadi translation]** all nations, for thou shalt be a father of many nations.

13 And thou shalt be fruitful and many nations shall come of thee and kings of nations shall be of thy seed.

14 Moreover, ye shall not cut yourselves in your foreskins after the manner of the heathen, for this is the lesser law and applieth only to those who have had part of the gospel cut off from that which they have received.

15 But your hearts are opened to the fullness of my gospel wherefore your foreskins shall be opened.

16 For if it were profitable for you to be without a foreskin, then would your father beget you in your mother without a foreskin.

17 Take not ye away what God hath given.

[These covenants were had from the time of Adam and were not to be changed. But as man changed them, it was necessary to institute a new dispensation (a new revelation of Priesthood), which was happening with Abraham.]

18 But let your foreskins be opened, for this is the true circumcision and it will be profitable unto you as a covenant written in your flesh, which shall be an everlasting covenant.

19 Your daughters also shall be circumcised upon the marriage bed **when the matrix is opened by the entrance of her husband, for this is an holy ordinance, and it is completed at the birth of her firstborn;** wherefore it is written that the firstborn which openeth the matrix is holy because it is an instrument in the performance of an holy ordinance.

[Interesting take on female circumcision. The principle behind all circumcision is the opening of the flesh.]

20 Now, go into the tabernacle and fast and pray until Noah cometh to bestow upon thee the keys of which I have spoken.

CHAPTER 111

WHEN the Lord had departed from me, I went into the tabernacle and I remained there fasting and praying for three days.

2 And at the end of that time Noah came to me and he said, **Hail, Abraham, for thou art highly favored of the Lord.**

[God always delegates to man when possible. Noah appeared to Abraham in the tabernacle, which we thought had never been constructed until the days of Moses.]

3 Behold, I come to thee from the city of Enoch my father to bestow upon thee **the keys which I received from Enoch many years ago, for thou shalt stand at the head** and thy posterity shall be without number and in thee and in thy seed after thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

4 When Noah had departed from me, I rose up and was circumcised by Eliezer and all the males of mine house were circumcised with me, including my son Ishmael who was thirteen years old at this time.

5 And I conferred upon my son Ishmael the Priesthood of Elias **[The preparatory Priesthood, not yet named after Aaron]** and ordained him to be a priest that he might minister before the Lord.

6 But Ishmael did not honor his priesthood, taking it to be a light thing, which thing was a grief of heart unto me **for I knew that in heaven he was counted as having no priesthood because he honored it not; wherefore, I did not call upon him to act in the priest's office.**

CHAPTER 112

AND the Lord appeared unto me in the plains of Mamre and he said unto me, Behold, Ishmael shall not be thine heir, neither Eliezer, for Sarah will I bless and I will give thee a son of her.

[God reaffirms His promise to Abraham that out of Sarah shall come his heir.]

2 She shall be the mother of nations and kings and people shall be of her.

3 Then I fell upon my face before the Lord and I rejoiced and I said unto Him, O Lord, it is a wondrous thing that this promise should be fulfilled when I am an hundred years old and Sarah is ninety.

4 And the Lord said, **Prepare thine heart to receive it, and he told me many secret things concerning the conception of the child which are great mysteries to the unenlightened, but the elect shall know them, and I rejoiced therein.**

CHAPTER 113

WHEN the Lord had told me these things, I thought of my son Ishmael and I prayed, O God, grant that Ishmael might live uprightly before Thee.

2 And the Lord God replied, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son and thou shalt call his name **Isaac** and I will continue in him the covenant which I have established with thee to be an everlasting covenant with his seed after him.

3 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee.

4 Behold, I have blessed him and will make him a great nation.

5 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac whom Sarah shall bear unto thee at this same time in the next year.

6 Then God left me and I saw Him ascend up into heaven and mine heart rejoiced in the promises of the Lord unto me.

CHAPTER 114

THREE months later the Lord sent unto me three of His ministering angels who were holy men of god from the city of Enoch.

[Other accounts say the three men were translated beings from the city of Melchizedek, but perhaps the city of Melchizedek had already been taken up at this time, and joined with the city of Enoch.]

2 For I was sitting at the door of my tent and I lifted up mine eyes from my meditations and, behold, three men in the distance were walking toward our camp.

3 And the Spirit of the Lord whispered unto me that they were holy men of god who had a blessing for me; wherefore, I rose up and ran to meet them; and, bowing down before them, I led them unto Sarah's tent.

4 Taking water from Sarah, I washed their feet and spreading a carpet under the tree which was at the door of Sarah's tent, I spread cushions upon it and caused them to sit down there.

5 And I called Eliezer and instructed him to send one of the young men to fetch a young and tender calf and supervise the preparation of it.

6 Sarah also supervised the young women in preparing cakes and milk and cheese, mutton and beef to eat until the calf was prepared.

CHAPTER 115

WHEN they had eaten, one of the holy men said unto me, We shall return to thee nine months hence and, behold, at that time Sarah shall bear a son.

2 Now, Sarah was listening at the door of the tent, and when she heard these words, she laughed within herself, knowing that she was past the age of bearing and I also was very old.

[This was the actual promise that Sarah would conceive and bear a son.]

3 But the holy man of God rebuked her, saying, Is anything too hard for the Lord?

4 Surely when we return here nine months hence, thou shalt bear a son.

5 Whereupon the three holy men of God entered with me into Sarah's tent and blessed her.

6 And the Holy Spirit fell upon Sarah in mighty power in the blessing and she conceived according to the word of the man of God.

[This further evidence of the foreshadowing of Isaac as a type of Christ – the unusual circumstances of his birth. Abraham was his father, and Sarah was his mother, but there were mysteries surrounding the conception of Isaac.]

CHAPTER 116

THEN the three holy men of God departed from our camp, and I walked with them to bring them on their way toward Sodom.

2 And the one who had before spoken, said unto me, **Abraham, we are from the city of Enoch and are ordained after the holy order of God.**

3 We have come not only to bless Sarah that thou mightest have seed raised up unto thee out of her, but also on a mission which bringeth us sorrow.

4 Nevertheless, the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I will do?

[Surely the Lord God will to nothing, until He revealeth his secret counsel unto His servants, the prophets.]

5 Nay, surely for his integrity he shall know what I am about to do.

6 Wherefore, Abraham, hast thou looked upon the iniquities of Sodom and her sister cities?

7 For they have provoked the Lord with their abominations.

[The angel is listing the specific abominations of Sodom.]

8 For four times in each year they gather together to sing and dance before their idol gods and when they are dancing **every man layeth hold upon the wives and daughters of his neighbors and lieth with them** and this they do without authority from God, which thing is an abomination in His sight.

9 But, behold, this is the least of their sins.

10 For no man is safe who entereth their city, for **when a stranger entereth there, they will take from him his goods by force and they will abuse his body, for both men and women will they bind and crowds of the Sodomites will gather about them and lie with them by force until everyone who desireth to lie with them hath done so.**

11 Now it is a wicked thing that men or women should be forced to lie with another against their will, but here the whole city uniteth to force this wicked thing. **[Rape is evil.]**

12 Moreover, **when they have stolen a man's goods and abused his flesh, they will torture him and when they tire of torturing him, they will leave him naked and without food or water to die in the streets of their city and it is forbidden by the law for anyone to help such an one by giving him food or drink.**

13 Moreover, **the people of these cities have numerous idol gods before which they practice every kind of abomination without authority.**

14 Wherefore, the Lord hath sent us to gather the righteous out of the cities before they are destroyed.

15 So saying, the three embraced me and kissed me and went on their way toward Sodom.

[Men lying with men was not the chief sin and pastime of the residents of Sodom. This act was a symbolic act of forced submission and humiliation, which was part of a greater abomination.]

CHAPTER 117

BUT I remained a long time where they had departed from me thinking on the things they had said, for it grieved mine heart that these great cities with all their inhabitants should be destroyed.

[Abraham had the heart of the Lord, and it grieved him that any should be destroyed, even on account of their wickedness. So, Abraham pled and reasoned with the Lord, looking for a way to spare them. It is not a sin to reason with the Lord, or to remind Him of the covenants He has made. He actually loves it when we show such initiative.]

2 Wherefore, I, too, went down to the vicinity of Sodom and I called upon the name of the Lord there.

3 And when He answered me out of heaven, I said unto Him, O Lord God, merciful and kind, wilt thou destroy the inheritances of the righteous because of the wicked?

4 Nay, O Lord, far be it from Thee to do this thing. Wilt thou not spare the inheritances of the righteous?

5 Peradventure there may be fifty righteous in the city, wilt thou in thine anger destroy the city and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous that are in it?

6 Surely, thou wilt not destroy the inheritances of the righteous because of the wicked.

7 Such a judgment should never be passed according to the justice of thine holy law which is in thy bosom.

8 And the Lord said, If I find in these cities fifty righteous who keep the laws and precepts of God and have not partaken of the abominations of the Sodomites, then surely I will spare the whole country for their sake.

CHAPTER 118

NEVERTHELESS, I ventured to speak before the Lord again, for I know that all His ways are just.

2 And I said unto Him, O Lord, suppose there shall lack but five of the fifty righteous. Wilt thou destroy the whole land for the lack of five men?

3 And He said, If there be forty-five righteous in the land, I will not destroy it.

4 And I spake unto the Lord again, saying, O Lord, I know that I am yet but dust and ashes, for although I am, by the testimony of thine own mouth, declared to be a son of God, yet I am not yet glorified to be like thee.

5 Nevertheless, be not displeased with me when I plead in behalf of the righteous; for suppose there shall be forty righteous in the land?

6 And He said, I will not destroy it if I find there forty.

7 Then I said, O Lord, thou hast been patient indeed with thy servant; wherefore, I shall speak yet again before thee, Suppose there shall thirty righteous be found there?

8 The Lord replied, I will not destroy it if I find thirty there.

9 Then I spake again saying, I have ventured to speak before the Lord; shall I now cease lest the righteous be destroyed with the wicked?

10 Suppose there shall be twenty righteous found in the land?

11 And the Lord said, I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty.

12 Finally I said, Oh, let not the Lord be displeased and I will speak only once more.

13 Suppose ten righteous shall be found there?

14 And he said, I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.

15 But thou, Abraham, remain here in prayer and fasting until my messengers return unto thee, for if ten righteous be not found in the land, I shall gather out those righteous who are found there and thou shalt be caught up of the earth to call down fire and brimstone upon the land by an holy ordinance inasmuch as thou art a priest and a king forever after the order of the Most High God, having the right of the Firstborn which hath come down from the fathers to exercise absolute authority over thy posterity, even the right of life and death under the direction of the Holy One.

[In the end, the Lord couldn't even find 10 righteous souls in the city, but there were four righteous souls: Lot, his wife and his two daughters.]

16 Nevertheless, remember that this authority can only be exercised under the direction of heaven, for when any man exerciseth his priesthood contrary to the will of heaven, his priesthood is forfeited, his authority passeth away and he can call upon the powers of heaven to accomplish no work from that day forward.

[Abraham had the sealing power, alluded to above, and power to control the elements. This power must be exercised by a man on the ground, not the Lord in the heavens. But it must be exercised according to the will of heaven, as explained, above.]

17 Wherefore, let all men repent of the exercise of unrighteous dominion and turn unto the Lord their God, that they be severed not from the rights of His House.

18 So saying, the Lord departed from me and I remained in that place in fasting and praying, awaiting the return of the three messengers.

CHAPTER 119

THIS is the account which Lot told unto me, Abraham, concerning the coming of the three messengers unto him in Sodom.

2 For Lot was sitting in the door of his house in the city of Sodom conversing with two of his sons-in-law who were Sodomites **[citizens of Sodom]**, when he saw three men approaching down the street of the city.

3 And the Spirit of the Lord whispered unto Lot, Behold these are my messengers who bring tidings of salvation.

4 Lot, therefore, rose up to meet them and bowing down before them, said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house and tarry all night that I may wash your feet and anoint your heads and feed you, and in the morning ye may go on leaving only a blessing upon the head of your servant.

[We are getting this story from Lot, as told to Abraham. Lot was just like Abraham in that he recognized the holy men, and offered them hospitality, which was against the law of the city.]

5 And they said, Nay, but we will abide in the street tonight for we have heard that it is not safe to enter into the house of a Sodomite lest we be abused and tortured and killed and our property stolen from us.

6 But Lot replied, Not so, my lords, for I am no sodomite, but a true worshiper of the Lord Jehovah and I know that ye are his messengers for his Spirit hath shown me this thing.

7 Then, when Lot had confessed his faith in the Lord Jehovah, the angels entered with him into his house and he did set before them a feast with unleavened bread and wine and they blessed it and partook thereof and Lot's family also partook and were filled.

CHAPTER 120

WHEN Lot's two sons-in-law saw him take the strangers into his home, **they went straightway unto the magistrates of the city for it was unlawful in the city of Sodom to entertain a stranger in your home.**

[This was the primary sin of Sodom and Gomorrah.]

2 Wherefore, the people of Sodom surrounded Lot's house, both young and old, all the people of the city.

3 And one of them called to Lot and said, where are the men whom thou tookest into thine house tonight?

4 Behold, thou knowest that it is contrary to our laws to thus entertain strangers.

5 Nevertheless, we will forgive thee for thou art a mighty prince among us; therefore, bring forth the men unto us that we may lie with them and do unto them according to all the desires of our hearts.

6 But Lot went out the door to the front of his house and securing the door behind him, he confronted the Sodomites.

7 And Lot said to them, I pray you, my brethren, do not these wicked things, for it is contrary to the law of the Most High God who is king over all, to force anyone to lie with another.

8 Repent now, therefore, that the wrath of the Most High God fall not upon you and ye with your city be destroyed.

9 But they were angry with Lot and they cried unto him, Stand away from the door lest we take thee also.

10 Thou hast come in among us and partaken of the good of our land and we have treated thee with honor although thou wast a stranger. dost thou now make thyself a judge over us?

[We welcomed you into the city because you were a mighty prince, but who are you to lecture us? As we will see, they valued obedience to the laws of the city, more than they valued Lot living among them.]

11 And their anger increased against Lot and they said unto him, Behold, we will deal worse with thee than with them.

12 Wherefore, we shall take thee and thy daughters and the men who have come in unto thee and any others in thine household who shall please us and we will do with you according to all our desires.

13 But Lot replied, Behold now, I have two daughters who have not lain with man.

14 Let me, I pray you, plead with you that ye take them not according to this wickedness and abuse them according to your abominations, for the most High God will surely destroy this city if ye repent not.

15 Wherefore, ye shall do nothing unto me nor my daughters nor the strangers that are within my gate nor any of mine household, for God will smite you in the attempt.

[Lot had two daughters who were married to two men of the city, and two daughters who were virgins. In an unbelievable gesture, he offers his virgin daughters to appease the mob gathered outside his door.]

16 And their anger increased yet more against Lot and they came near to break down the door, but the messengers of God who were holy men bearing the Power of the Priesthood after God's holy order, put forth their hands, pulled Lot into the house and shut the door behind him.

17 Then they smote the people of Sodom with blindness so that they could not find the door.

CHAPTER 121

AND one of these holy men said unto Lot, Take now all that appertaineth unto thee, whether persons or goods, out of this city, for the wrath of God is upon this place and tomorrow it shall be destroyed because the cries of those who have been abused here have risen unto the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth and the abominations of the Sodomites have come up before His face.

2 Wherefore, surely upon the morrow the vengeance of the Lord shall fall upon Sodom that neither root nor branch shall be left here for the fullness of their iniquity hath come upon them and in the fullness thereof they shall be cut off.

3 Therefore, Lot went forth at that time and spake unto his sons-in-law and his married daughters and all who had gone forth with him from our camp, saying, Up, get you out of their place for on the morrow the Lord will destroy this city.

4 But his words were as foolishness unto them and they mocked him.

5 And Lot returned unto his house in sorrow.

[The Holy men had seen enough. It was time for bring down the judgments of God. Before doing so, however, they offered Lot and family a chance to escape, but his married daughters refused to leave.]

CHAPTER 122

WHEN morning came, the men of god hastened Lot saying, Arise, take thy wives and thy daughters who are here with thee in the house and depart hence lest ye be consumed by the wrath of god which shall be visited upon the iniquities of Sodom.

2 And while they were preparing to depart, Lot's heart being full of sorrow at leaving his daughters and his daughters' children to be destroyed, **the men of God took him by the hand [teleported them to safety using miraculous means?]** with his wives and his daughters, for the Lord had mercy upon Lot because of his integrity, because he had not bowed down unto false gods nor entered into the abominations of Sodom.

3 And Lot thought to dwell in Zoar **[Rather than live alone in the mountains. Lot preferred city life.];** wherefore, he hastened there, but his wife Ado turned back unto the city of Sodom.

4 Ado was the daughter of Eli, the son of Eliezer, which Eli had accompanied Lot to Sodom.

5 And Ado thought upon her parents and her daughters who remained in the city, her heart was pained within her and she turned back unto them and was lost.

[Now, we have an idea who Lot's wife looked back.]

6 But Lot entered with the rest of his family into Zoar and was there when the cities of the plains were overthrown.

CHAPTER 123

THEN the three holy men of god came unto me, Abraham, where I was fasting and praying nigh unto Sodom, **and they lifted me up into the heavens and taught me the ordinances -- the key words and the signs -- by which I might call down fire and brimstone upon the cities.**

[This is how God works. God in control in the heavens, but always operates through the Priesthood, acting on earth. This pattern was followed with Noah and the flood, with Moses and his many plagues and miracles. And, thus, will it be what the Son of Man returns to usher in the Millennium. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout (a word of command, uttered from the earth), with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:" (1 Thes. 4:16).]

2 And I did as I was commanded by the angels of god and the cities were destroyed.

3 And when I saw the destruction of the land, mine heart was sorrowful, but the Lord said unto me, I have had mercy upon Lot and have sent him out of the city that he was not destroyed, for he was the only righteous man in all the cities.

4 Wherefore, mine heart was comforted.

CHAPTER 124

AND when the destruction was over, Lot feared to continue dwelling in Zoar, lest it also should be destroyed.

2 Wherefore, he took his family and went unto the cave of Adullam and dwelt there.

3 And the word of the Lord came unto Lot saying, Go in now unto thy two daughters who are with thee who have not known man, for they shall conceive by thee that thy posterity shall not be cut off from the earth.

[This is an interesting change from the Bible. In Genesis, the two daughters trick Lot into having sex with them. Here the Lord commands lot to have sex with them. In effect, the Lord, in this case, sanctions incest.]

4 So Lot went in unto his two daughters and lay with them and they conceived by him.

5 And the firstborn bare a son and called his name Moab.

6 And the younger also bare a son and she called his name Benammi.

7 And Lot dwelt in the cave for five years and after that he took his wives and his daughters and his sons whom his daughters had borne unto him and dwelt on the other side of Jordan.

8 And the Lord blessed him and prospered him and he dwelt in safety.

CHAPTER 125

AFTER the destruction of the cities of the plains, I, Abraham, journeyed to the south to the land of Gerar.

2 Now the king of the land of Gerar was Abimelech, and he was one who worshipped the Most High God and he was just and upright in all his ways.

3 And Abimelech had entered the Holy Order of God and was a priest and a king after the Order of the Most High God and had received the rites and ordinances of the gospel.

4 As a youth he had dwelt with me in the city of Shalom and he was as a brother unto me and we shared all things.

5 When Sarah and I went in unto Abimelech to commune with him, the Spirit of the Lord fell upon Abimelech and he blessed Sarah in great outpourings after the Order of the Ancients and anointed her that she might bear holy seed and we rejoiced in the blessings of the Lord unto Sarah through the three holy men from the City of Enoch and through His servant Abimelech.

[Abraham and Abimelech were “classmates” at the school in Shalom. Being in tune with the Lord, he also blessed Sarah, as the Spirit constrained him to do. It is said that following the dedication of the Kirtland House of the Lord, and the great outpouring of the Spirit enjoyed there, that the members would often greet one another with: “I have a blessing for you.” Whereupon the other person replied: “Well, I have a blessing for you.” As a Patriarch, I try to be in tune with the Father and with His mind and will. He has blessings for each of us and for the whole world. I often feel led to offer a blessing on someone, and when I do, I try to disguise the blessing as a compliment so that they don’t feel uncomfortable with some stranger just walking up and laying hands on their head and offering a prayer.]

6 And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me also and I blessed her and anointed her that the Spirit of the Lord might fall upon her in a greater outpouring to the sanctification of herself and her seed.

7 And we rejoiced together for three nights and two days and worshipped the Lord our God and were filled with joy and peace in the blessings of the Lord unto us.

8 And we were magnified in the Lord.

[This must have been a great reunion.]

CHAPTER 126

THE next night, after Sarah and I had returned to our camp, Abimelech was seated upon his throne praying when a sleep from the Lord fell upon him and he slept there all that night.

2 And while he slept, he dreamed a dream in which an angel of the Lord with a drawn sword in his hand came and stood above him.

3 And Abimelech was frightened at the angel, but the angel said unto him, Fear not, for because thou hast faithfully entered into the rites and ordinances of my gospel and hast walked an holy walk before me and didst uphold Shem and Abraham after him in the work which I have called them to do in maintaining mine holy order in the earth, behold, I am sent to stand by thy side and shall protect thee against all the power of the adversary.

4 For thy sins are forgiven thee and thine exaltation is sure and thou shalt dwell forever in the presence of thy God.

5 So saying, the angel departed from the vision of Abimelech, but he felt his presence near him from that time forth and the adversary thereafter exercised no power over him.

[Wouldn’t that be a great experience? I once had an angel with a drawn sword standing near me, at the entrance to a room, I had dedicated following the order of the Priesthood. I feel ungrateful and unobservant for having neglected to look for that angel again, to acknowledge his presence and thank him for his unending service, because I have felt under the protection of angels. But they don’t need our gratitude, or need us to know their names. They are just there, serving silently. We can also ask the Lord to send an angel to bring us our spiritual armor. But that is a subject for another time.]

CHAPTER 127

WE had dwelt in Gerar nine months when the three holy men of God again visited us and Sarah gave birth to a son.

2 And on the eighth day he was circumcised according to the commandment of the Lord to me and I called his name Isaac. The child grew and when he was three years old, he was weaned and I made a great feast on the day he was weaned.

[Apparently, this was great cause for celebration.]

3 And Melchizedek, king of Shalom, with Eber his heir **[This is new information. Eber was heir to Melchizedek and Shalom had not yet ascended.]** and Abimelech, king of Gerar with his son, Abimelech, and Pharaoh, king of Egypt, father to Hagar and Ishmael, and all the mighty princes of the land came to the feast which I prepared, for these were the men whom I loved, with my brethren Aneram, Eshcol, and Mamre.

[It was OK back then for men to have close friendships with their brethren, especially their brethren in the Priesthood, and to express affection for them. Priesthood is one big brotherhood, and as our ties with our brethren, strengthen and deepen, so does our collective power in the Priesthood – here and in the eternities. This is a secret to God’s power.]

4 My father, Terah, also, and my brother, Nahor, came unto the feast having heard that Sarah had borne a son. And we all rejoiced before the Lord for many days that my son Isaac had reached the age of weaning from his mother.

[This was cause for a celebration. After many long years, Abraham finally had an heir. The entire extended family had cause to rejoice.]

5 And from that time forth Sarah and I introduced the lad into the tabernacle and began to instruct him in the mysteries of godliness that he might be prepared in his youth to enter into the Holy of Holies and be instructed there.

[Note that BOTH Sarah and Abraham instructed the boy. They taught him both the basics and the mysteries.]

6 For Shem had instructed me in the city of Shalom that children should be **instructed in the temple** from the age of weaning which is three years old, that they should be **instructed in the Holy of Holies** from the age of puberty which is twelve years old, and that **they should be endowed with power from on high from the age of maturity**, which is fourteen years.

[I believe this is what the Lord had in mind for the School of the Prophets in Kirtland. Eventually, the temple in Zion will have such a school. D&C 88:119 “Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God;”]

7 But inasmuch as I had not journeyed unto the city of Shalom until I was ten years old, I was prepared for the blessings of the Lord's House in only a few years.

CHAPTER 128

MY son Ishmael I did not introduce into the Lord's House in his childhood because he was not spiritual in his nature, but he was a hunter, proficient in the use of the bow and other instruments of death.

2 Nevertheless, the Lord was with Ishmael and blessed him for my sake in all to which he put his hand.

3 When Isaac was five years old, he was sitting with Ishmael at the door of Hagar's tent where Ishmael was sharpening his arrows, for Ishmael was sixteen years old at this time.

4 As they thus sat at the door of Hagar's tent, Isaac picked up one of Ishmael's arrows and brake it.

5 Seeing this, Ishmael grew angry and taking another arrow, he fitted it to his bow intending to slay Isaac, but the Lord touched his heart so that he did not slay him.

[I have read about this legend in other stories about Abraham, Isaac, and Ishmael.]

6 But Sarah saw this thing which Ishmael had intended to do to Isaac and she was grieved at it.

7 That night when I entered the tent of Sarah, she said to me, Let Hagar and her son be sent to dwell apart, for this day did Ishmael seek to slay Isaac.

8 Now these words caused me great sorrow for I did not desire to see my family divided.

9 But that night an angel of the Lord came unto me in a dream, saying, Hearken unto the words of Sarah, thy wife, and let Hagar and her son Ishmael dwell apart lest harm come upon they son Isaac who shall be thine heir.

[It really was time for the boys to part company, and Sarah was the first to sense it.]

CHAPTER 129

THEREFORE, I arose early in the morning and took Hagar and my son Ishmael into the deserts of Arabia where dwelt a people who were friendly to me.

2 And there I built with Ishmael a temple unto the Lord our God that his seed might always be kept in remembrance of the Lord.

3 And Hagar and Ishmael dwelt among the people of the desert and were content, and Ishmael was a mighty hunter with the bow among them.

4 And every year at a certain time I went and dwelt with my wife, Hagar, and with my son, Ishmael.

5 And when Ishmael was twenty years of age, his mother asked my consent to take him to the house of her father in Egypt, for she longed to see her family again.

[How kind of Abraham to set everything up for them.]

6 Wherefore, I gave them my blessing and they departed into the land of Egypt where they remained one year.

7 And while they were in Egypt, Ishmael took to wife Meribah, daughter of Phanes, son of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

[Ishmael was of royal Egyptian blood, so it was fitting that he marry into the line of the Pharaohs.]

8 And after he had taken Meribah to wife, they remained in the land of Egypt yet ten years and Meribah bare unto Ishmael four sons and two daughters.

9 After this time, Ishmael took his mother and his wife and his children and returned to the deserts of Arabia.

10 And the Lord blessed Ishmael for my sake and increased him in flocks and in herds and in good things.

CHAPTER 130

WHEN Ishmael had returned from the land of Egypt, I went as was my custom to stay with my wife Hagar and my son Ishmael.

2 And when Ishmael was away hunting, his wife Meribah spake disrespectfully to me and complained of my being in their tents.

3 Moreover, she abused her children and when I chastised her for this thing, she rose up in anger against me.

4 My wife Hagar saw all these things, and when her son Ishmael had returned from the hunt, she complained unto him of the actions of Meribah toward me.

5 And Ishmael came unto me and said, My father, what shall I do with such a wife who abuseth my father and my children and speaketh evil of me, for she had spoken against her husband Ishmael, also.

6 And I said unto him, Such an one is not fit to be thy wife nor the mother of thy children nor to dwell in thy tents; wherefore, give her a bill of divorcement and send her back to the home of her father in shame and find another more worthy than she to be thy wife and the mother of these children.

7 So Ishmael gave unto Meribah a bill of divorcement and sent her back to her father Phanes in the land Egypt and his mother Hagar raised his children until he took another wife.

[How they dealt with domestic problems back then.]

CHAPTER 131

THE next year Ishmael came to my camp and when he had kissed me and we had eaten together, he said unto me, My father, according to thine instructions I did give unto my wife Meribah a bill of divorcement and sent her back to the home of her father in shame.

2 Now, therefore, I come unto thee to seek thy counsel concerning obtaining another in her place.

3 Now, it pleased me that my son Ishmael had come to me regarding choosing a wife.

4 Therefore, I sought among the women of my camp and found two who were desirous of being wife to Ishmael, even Zola, the daughter of my wife Peleliah and Naiomi, the daughter Kemuel, the son of Kish, who had been among the believers who met in the room of my mother in the city of Ur.

5 And I was pleased to give them unto my son Ishmael because he had come to me for counsel and because he had begun to magnify his priesthood for he did worship the Lord our God and sought to overcome his weaknesses.

6 And Ishmael and his family dwelt with me a long time in Gerar and after that, when I moved my camp to Beersheba, which is by Hebron.

CHAPTER 132

AND Sarah and I continued to teach our son Isaac and instruct him in the ways of the ancients that he might be initiated into the Holy Order of God and receive the blessings of eternal lives.

2 And Isaac did know the Lord and the Lord was with him and did bless him greatly because he was full of faith and love and did good to all he met.

[Abraham was a present and respected father to both families, and raised each boy according to his needs, talents, and interests. Abraham knew they would lead separate lives, and didn't force either one into becoming a son in his exact image.]

CHAPTER 133

WHEN Isaac was thirty-even years old, he was one day talking with his brother Ishmael.

2 And Ishmael was boasting of his righteousness, saying, I was thirteen years old when the Lord spake to my father to circumcise us, and from that time I have consecrated my soul unto the Lord and kept His commandments as they have come unto me from my father.

3 But Isaac answered him saying, Why dost thou boast in thy righteousness, for none of us are without sin and all mankind is as nothing before the Lord.

4 And we must be prepared to be offered upon the altar as a sacrifice to our God with joy that we can glorify Him before our calling and election is made sure.

[Ishmael's heart was never right before the Lord. If it were, he would never boast of his righteousness. Isaac knew what we must be willing to offer all that we have: even our own body, soul, and our own salvation in order to obey the Lord. Jesus offered as much. Can we afford to do otherwise?

It is in vain for persons to fancy to themselves that they are heirs with those, or can be heirs with them, who have offered their all in sacrifice, and by this means obtain faith in God and favor with him so as to obtain eternal life, unless they, in like manner, offer unto him the same sacrifice, and through that offering obtain the knowledge that they are accepted of him.
Lecture 6

And now behold, I say unto you that the right way is to believe in Christ, and deny him not; and Christ is the Holy One of Israel; wherefore ye must bow down before him, and worship him with all your might, mind, and strength, and your whole soul; and if ye do this ye shall in nowise be cast out. (2 Nephi 25:29)]

CHAPTER 134

THIS saying of Isaac's pleased the Lord and the Lord visited me, saying, Thy son Isaac have I seen and his heart is right before me and he is clean and pure, an acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord.

[Be careful what you say. The Lord just might take you up on it. I remember once, when I was in the midst of a sinful life, saying to the Lord: "I will not shrink from guilt out of your Presence. Nothing will separate me from you, and if you want to get rid of me, you will have to cast me out." The Lord liked those kinds of words, and thinking to Himself, "This is the kind of man I can work with.", He arranged circumstances in my life where I was slowly and carefully transformed to a new man, and brought to a point where I am always in His Presence, day and night.]

2 And the Lord touched the eyes of mine understanding that they were opened and I saw the sons of God gathered in council with the Father and Lucifer also was among them.

[I understand that Brigham Young taught a version of this story. Pray for your own discernments.]

3 And the Lord said to Lucifer, Surely thou hast been abroad in the earth trying the hearts of men.

4 Whom hast thou found standing in his integrity who should be further tried to know whether he be thine or mine?

5 Lucifer replied, Hast thou considered Abraham and Sarah and Isaac? For I am unable to lead them into sin in whatever matter I place before them.

6 They are united in perfect bonds of love and purity and even Abraham hath united all his family again which was divided.

7 Surely, they should be tried to know whether they are faithful only in their prosperity or whether they will be faithful also in adversity.

8 And the Lord said unto Lucifer, Were I to say unto Abraham, Bring up Isaac thy son unto the high place and offer him as a burnt offering unto me, **he would not withhold him from me nor would Isaac refuse to be offered [The test was for all of them, Isaac included.]**.

9 And Lucifer answered the Lord, **Speak now unto Abraham as thou hast said and we shall see whether his heart is perfect with the Lord or whether his end shall be in my kingdom.**

[This sounds like Job. It may also run against conventional wisdom, but Satan can only touch us to the extent God allows it, and it usually comes at a certain point in our progression, and it usually hits us at our most vulnerable point. God will give you a clue as to when and how this will happen. You will be a proven, righteous person. You will be ready to take your next step, as soon as you pass this test.

God won't test you, but he will allow Lucifer to test you.

The above conversation sounds like a gentlemen's agreement. People don't like it when I say this, but Satan acts as a kind of "quality control". God uses Satan to refine us. God's plans always take Satan into account, but Satan's plans never take God into account.

You will face a choice, and that choice will be between your faith in something that God has promised or commanded you to do in the past, and something that He is commanding you to do right at the moment. Your task and your test is to determine whose voice you will listen to.

Abraham's choice was between the promised blessings embodied in Isaac, and to immediately obey the commands of God to sacrifice him. But there was another choice, too. Should Abraham obey the command of God to sacrifice Isaac, or obey the command of God to stop. To be a real test, Abraham would have to suspend his own desires and let them be swallowed in utter obedience to God. Only in this way could he sacrifice in the same manner of Christ.]

CHAPTER 135

WITH these words, the vision was closed to my mind and the Lord said unto me, Abraham, take now thy son Isaac whom thou lovest and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there for a burnt offering upon the mountain upon which thou shalt see the glory of the Lord resting as a cloud.

2 And the Lord departed from me and left me to consider these things.

[The Lord gives you a head's up, then let's you work it out in your mind. This was still a test for the family, because the Lord did not reveal that in the end, he would spare Isaac.]

CHAPTER 136

NOW Sarah's heart was knit unto Isaac's insomuch that she did keep him by her side whenever possible and he did sleep upon her bed at night.

[There is a special bond between mother and son, especially if the son is her only offspring.]

2 Wherefore, I thought, How shall I separate Isaac from his mother Sarah for such a journey lest her heart be grieved and she die in her grief?

3 So I went in unto Sarah and comforted her and afterwards I said unto her, Our son Isaac we have taught these many years and I feel now that I should take him unto Shem and Eber, his son, where he can be instructed by the ancient ones in the mysteries of the ancients that he may become a perfect servant of the Lord our God.

4 Sarah replied, Thou hast spoken well, my lord. Go to now and do all as thou hast said, only let the lad remain not too long apart from me for my soul is bound to his soul with a perfect love from God.

5 And I answered Sarah saying, My daughter, let us pray to the Lord our God that we may yield to His will in all things and that all things will work together for our good.

CHAPTER 137

AND Isaac slept with us that night and Sarah kissed and embraced him and instructed him until morning.

2 And she said to him, O my son, how can my soul separate itself from thee?

3 And she still kissed and embraced him until the time of preparation had come.

4 Then Sarah took a beautiful and costly robe from among those which Abimelech had given her, for Abimelech had loved Sarah greatly and had given her many precious things, but his love toward her was pure in the sight of God and according to the laws of heaven.

[Abimelech loved Sarah, but the love was platonic.]

5 With this robe which had never been worn, Sarah clothed Isaac and put a turban upon his head in which she wrapped a precious stone.

6 And she said unto him, Even as this stone art thou precious unto me, my son.

[A stone worn in a turban-like crown was called a “diadem”. In scripture, it signified royal Patriarchal Priesthood authority.]

7 Nevertheless, I would have thee so conduct thy life that when the Lord shall come to gather up his jewels, thou wilt be among the number.

CHAPTER 138

THUS, taking provisions for our journey, we started out and Sarah and others of our people accompanied us upon the road.

2 And when the time of parting had arrived, Sarah wept bitterly and I also wept with her as did Isaac our son and those who accompanied us.

3 And Sarah caught hold of Isaac and held him in her arms and embraced him and kissed him and wept over him and Sarah said unto him, Who knoweth if after this day I shall ever see thee again? **[Prophetic.]**

4 Nevertheless, our hope is in the Lord Jehovah in whom is life.

5 Therefore, if I see thee not again in this veil of tears, yet surely, we shall again embrace before the throne of God.

6 God bless thee, my son, and keep thee secure in His ways and I will be close to thee all thy days.

7 So saying, Sarah kissed Isaac again and turned back to the camp with all who had accompanied us.

CHAPTER 139

AS we proceeded upon our journey, **Satan came to me in the form of an aged man, humble and contrite**, who said unto me, How canst thou think to do so unto thy son?

2 Did not God give thee this son **by an holy conception after the Order of the Ancients** and dost thou think so little of this precious gift that thou wilt take his life as thou wouldst slaughter a dumb beast and thus cut off thine only hope of a royal posterity in the earth?

3 What evil hath he done unto thee that thou shouldst do this thing?

4 Dost thou not understand that this thing cannot be from the Lord?

5 Behold the Lord delighteth not in human sacrifice.

6 Did he not smite the priest of Nimrod for seeking to take thy life in like manner?

7 Surely, thou shouldst repent of this thy purpose and return thy son unto the bed of his mother, Sarah.

8 But I knew that this was the word of Satan seeking to prevent my obeying the word of the Lord; wherefore, I commanded him to depart by the authority of the holy priesthood in the name of the Lord, and he departed from me in haste.

[Satan appeared to Abraham as a kindly old gentleman presenting plausible arguments for why Abraham should not sacrifice Isaac. Each argument seems to make sense, but if Abraham had given in, he would be in Satan's power. What I am wondering was how the old man knew so much. That would have been my first clue. Abraham dismissed him without argument, and they continued on their journey.]

CHAPTER 140

A short time later, **Satan came again, appearing to Isaac in the form of a handsome and pleasing young man.**

2 And he said unto Isaac, Dost thou not understand that thine old father in his foolishness bringeth thee to be slain today for no purpose **[One of Satan's tactics is to try and convince you that all is in vain.]?**

3 Now therefore, my brother, go not with him for it is the foolishness of his old age that doeth this.

4 Therefore, let not thy precious life and thy beautiful body be lost from the earth in such a manner, but come with me and I will introduce thee to the pleasures of the earth and thou shalt take pleasure therein all thy days.

5 When Isaac heard this, he saith unto me, My father, surely this is Satan come to dissuade me from obeying the word of the Lord for thus doth he appear and thus doth he say unto me.

6 Wherefore, my father, rebuke him in the name of the Lord that he shall cease from troubling me for I know that thou art a servant of the Most High God and that it is to fulfill the will of the Lord that we are come unto this place.

7 Wherefore, I, Abraham, rebuked Satan in the name of the Lord Jehovah, the God of Noah and of Shem, and he departed from us in fear.

[This time, Satan appeared in a different form to Isaac and appealed to Isaac's vanity. Not that Isaac had any vanity, but it sounded like a convincing appeal. It's interesting to me that Isaac asked Abraham to rebuke Satan instead of doing it himself. There must be a reason. Isaac had been educated in the use of the Priesthood. Perhaps it was because Abraham had the sealing power and Isaac did not, or perhaps, as the senior member of the team, it was Abraham's responsibility. Again, Abraham and Isaac withstood the temptation.]

CHAPTER 141

AS we continued on our journey, we entered a narrow ravine with high walls.

2 When we were in the mist of it, we heard a mighty rumbling and the earth shook beneath our feet.

3 Looking back, we saw a great wall of water coming down upon us bearing trees and boulders in a mighty flood.

4 Mine heart was moved within me for my son Isaac and he sought also to protect me, but raising mine hands to heaven I called upon the Name of the Lord and the Lord heard me out of heaven and stopped the flood until we had ascended from the ravine.

[Satan tried using the elements to hedge up the way, but Abraham had the Sealing Power and was able to command the elements to withdraw, and they obeyed.]

5 Thus did Satan seek to destroy us that we might not offer an acceptable sacrifice unto the Lord our God but the power of our God is mightier than that of Satan; wherefore, Satan can do no harm unto the children of men except the Lord God allow him to do it.

6 Therefore, do all things, whether they be good or evil, work together for the good of the saints of God who serve Him and keep His commandments.

CHAPTER 142

AND on the third day, we saw the place afar off which the Lord had appointed for the sacrifice of my beloved son Isaac.

2 And I knew the place because the glory of the Lord was there as a pillar of fire and a glorious cloud.

3 And when I saw the place, I said unto my son Isaac, My son, dost thou see aught upon yonder mountain?

4 And Isaac replied, yea, my father, for the glory of the Lord resteth upon it as a pillar of fire and a glorious cloud.

5 Then I rejoiced that my son was found worthy to see this sign also and we bowed down there and worshipped the Lord our God.

[Isaac's spiritual eyes were open. Don't believe that if your spiritual eyes are not open that you are unworthy. Seeing in the Spirit is a skill that must be cultivated. The Lord will coach you through it, if you ask Him.]

CHAPTER 143

AS we approached the mountain, Isaac said unto me, My father, we have with us the fire and the wood, but we have no lamb to serve as a burnt offering unto the Lord.

[We read in Chapter 140 that Isaac understood that *he* was to be the sacrifice. But not he doesn't seem to understand.]

2 Explain now unto me the mystery hidden in this thing that I may be obedient unto all which the Lord thy God requireth of me.

3 Then I rejoiced, for I knew that the Lord had revealed in the heart of my son Isaac that which we must do.

4 Therefore I said unto him, **Isaac, my son, the Lord hath chosen thee to be a perfect burnt offering unto him instead of the lamb.**

5 And **this thing is a type of the Lord of spirits who is our first Father and his Only Begotten Son who is the Lamb slain from before the foundation to the earth.**

6 For **surely God will offer his only son as a sacrifice upon the cross to atone for our sins and for the sins of all mankind, that all men might be redeemed from the power of death and be brought to stand before the judgement bar of the great Jehovah to be judged according to their works, that every man**

might receive a righteous and just judgment and that mercy might have claim upon the penitent, the price of their sins having been paid by the Son of God.

7 Yea, surely, **my son, we have been chosen to represent the Father and the Son in this thing, and though I grieve to think of losing thee, my beloved**, yet I rejoice that we are honored thus to represent God.

[Note that Abraham calls Isaac “his beloved”, just as the Father called His Son “beloved”. Do you supposed that if it were possible, the Father would have suffered in the place of His Son? Do you suppose Abraham would have willingly taken the place of Isaac upon that altar?]

CHAPTER 144

AND Isaac said unto me, I will do all that the Lord hath commanded thee, my father, with joy in mine heart that I am chosen to represent the son of God in this sacrifice, and I have this hope in me, that if we are faithful to all the commandments of the Lord our God, I shall yet stand in the flesh with thee and my mother before the throne of the Ancient of Days and receive from him the promise of exaltation and eternal lives.

2 When I heard this answer, I rejoiced in my son Isaac whose heart was pure and upright before the Lord.

[What a testimony! Willing to submit to all that God doth inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father!]

3 But the Spirit of the Lord constrained me to test him further, and I said unto him, Hast thou any thoughts or feelings which would prevent thy being offered as a perfect sacrifice before the Lord?

4 For if thou dost in any way doubt the efficacy of this sacrifice, which is in the similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father which is full of grace and truth, it is not meet that thou shouldst be offered as a sacrifice before our God.

[It was not enough just to offer his body, Isaac had to do so with the correct faith and intention, because the Lord looks upon our hearts. The same applied to Abraham as well. He must be willing to sacrifice his son with singleness of heart to the glory of God.]

5 But Isaac answered me saying, O my father, as the Lord liveth and as thou liveth as an holy man of god, I know that thou art a servant of the Most High God and that thou dost hold the keys of the fathers.

6 Thou hast never asked me to do anything which was not of God but thou hast taught me by precept and example to serve the Lord thy God in every act of my life.

7 Shall I then shrink from being offered by thee as a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God?

8 Nay, but I shall rejoice forever to have been so honored.

9 Blessed is the Lord thy God who hath this day chosen me to be sacrificed as a burnt offering before him.

[Isaac was willing to lay down his all, with full purpose of heart, and all to the glory of God.]

CHAPTER 145

THUS we came unto the place which the Lord had appointed for the offering of my son, rejoicing in the glory of our God.

2 Yet I did weep at the thought of losing my beloved son Isaac and at the knowledge of the pain this would bring to his mother Sarah, for their souls were united as one.

3 Nevertheless, my heart rejoiced that I was chosen with my son for this holy ordinance that we might thereby magnify the name of the Lord.

[Abraham also had a tender heart, and he was showing all of His true colors, now. How pleased the Lord must have been looking down upon such purity and faith. The Lord does not relish bloodshed, either, but this demonstration of faith must have been moving.]

CHAPTER 146

AFTER kneeling in prayer unto the Lord our God, Isaac and I constructed an altar before the Lord and I laid the wood in order upon the altar which we had built.

2 And Isaac lay upon the altar and I bound him there and he said unto me, Bind me securely lest I move beneath the force of the knife and profane the offering before the Lord.

3 So I bound him securely that he could not move upon the altar.

4 And I wept as I prepared my son for the sacrifice and Isaac wept with me, yet our hearts rejoiced to have been found worthy of this great blessing.

CHAPTER 147

WHEN all was prepared, I picked up the knife, kissed my son Isaac, and prepared to offer him as a sacrifice unto the Lord my God.

2 But the voice of the Lord came unto me saying, Abraham, slay not thy son, for I have tested you in this manner that I might know that your hearts are perfect before me.

[The voice of the Lord spoke up just in time to stop the killing. What if Abraham had been too grief-stricken to hear? But, no, Abraham was ever alert to hear the voice of the Lord.]

3 Now I know that ye fear the Lord your God in that thou hast not withheld thine heir from mine altar and he hath willingly lain thereon to be a sacrifice of a burnt offering unto the Lord.

4 Therefore, lift up thine eyes and behold the ram that was chosen from the beginning to stand in the place of thy son Isaac as a burnt offering before me.

5 And I looked up and saw a **ram** caught by his horns in a thicket.

6 For as the ram had advanced to the sacrifice, Satan had caught him in the thicket that he might not be offered in Isaac's stead.

7 But I went and freed him from the thicket and releasing my son Isaac, I placed the ram upon the altar and offered him in Isaac's place, **that his blood might be considered as the blood of Isaac before the Lord.**

8 And the Lord accepted the sacrifice of the ram as if it had been Isaac and the Lord appeared unto us and blessed me and my seed on that day.

[Isaac was to be sacrificed in place of a lamb, then the ram was sacrificed in place of Isaac. There is a lesson here.]

9 And we rejoiced in the Lord.

CHAPTER 148

WHEN all things were finished, Isaac and I returned to our camp rejoicing in the Lord our God.

2 But when we reached the place we found that Sarah was not there, for the agents of Satan had come to her saying, Behold, dost thou not understand that Abraham goeth to offer thy son Isaac as a burnt offering unto the Lord his God?

3 Surely, he doeth this because he is jealous of thy love for thy son Isaac.

4 Go, therefore, and stop this thing lest he to whom thine heart is knitted be destroyed from off the face of the earth.

CHAPTER 149

BUT Sarah said, Surely the heart of my lord Abraham is right with the Lord his God for he walketh before him in all his ways.

[In the meantime, Satan tempted Sarah to lose heart, but she continued to support Abraham in his trials. This is often the role of the helpmeet – to support a servant of the Lord to fulfill his mission. And Satan will attempt to deter her as well, as she must also pass her test.]

2 Nevertheless, shall my son Isaac be offered as a burnt offering and I not be there to weep over him and strengthen him and pray for him that he be an acceptable offering unto the Lord god of Abraham?

3 Nay, but I shall go to him.

4 And Sarah departed with her menservants and her maidservants and went as far as Hebron but found us not.

5 Therefore, Sarah rested in Hebron and sent her young men to find us, who searched all the land round about and even in the city of Shalom but found us not.

6 Then Sarah prayed unto the lord saying, O Lord God of Abraham, surely I know that all things are in thine hand, and I do not fear for my son Isaac for I know that mine husband Abraham is an high priest after thine holy order.

7 Nevertheless, it is my desire to be with my son at this holy hour that I might share his joy and his sorrow before the Lord our God.

CHAPTER 150

THEN the word of the Lord came unto Sarah saying, Surely, I have accepted the offering of Isaac and have provided a ram prepared before the foundation of the earth was laid to be offered in his place; wherefore, thy son liveth and is with his father Abraham and even now searcheth for thee.

2 When Sarah heard these words, her heart was filled with joy so that she could not contain it and her spirit was lifted up to see the Paradise of God and she exclaimed, Behold, I have seen my Redeemer and it sufficeth me, and she gave up the ghost.

3 Thus did Sarah die in Hebron being one hundred and twenty-seven years old and she died having seen her Redeemer and having received from him the promise of eternal life.

[Sarah believed the Lord, and it was accounted to *her* for righteousness. Then she died in faith, never seeing her beloved son again, but rejoicing that he passed his test.]

CHAPTER 151

THEN was word brought unto us, that Sarah was gone unto Hebron, wherefore we journeyed there and found that Sarah had died.

2 But having inquired after the manner of her death, we rejoiced that she went with the promise of exaltation and that she died knowing of Isaac's salvation and his acceptance with God.

3 Then we took Sarah unto a cave which I purchased of Ephron the Hittite for that purpose and we buried her there and we wept over her, yet we rejoiced in her righteousness before God.

4 And all the people of the land came to honor Sarah with Pharaoh who came from Egypt and Abimelech from Gerar and many others who honored and loved Sarah.

5 For she was truly an handmaiden of the Lord and ministered unto many in the name of the Lord in love and charity and was greatly loved by all for her kindness and meekness and her great wisdom in godliness.

[Everyone gathered to honor Sarah. She was buried in the same cave where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would be buried, together with Rebekah, Rachel, Adam, and Eve.]

CHAPTER 152

THUS, I, Abraham, began to be old having seen one hundred and thirty-seven years.

2 Wherefore, I write this record of my life that others might benefit from the workings of the Lord my God with me.

3 And I bear this witness that the Lord liveth and reigneth in the heavens, and he is the Most High God over all the earth.

4 He hath led me since first he appeared to me in a dream when I was three years of age, even unto this time when I am old and bowed down with years.

5 He hath done only good to me and not evil all the days of my life.

6 Surely, I will love him and serve him forever and ever and will magnify his name on high before all people. Amen.

[Abraham bears his testimony.]

CHAPTER 153

AFTER Sarah's death, I sent my son Isaac unto Shem and Eber to learn more perfectly the ways of the ancients and he remained there three years before returning to my camp.

CHAPTER 154

IN the one hundred thirty-eighth year of my life, my brother Abimelech, king of Gerar, died being one hundred and ninety-three years of age.

2 Wherefore, I took my people and journeyed to Gerar where we mourned over Abimelech for, he was a good and holy man who walked in perfectness before his God and had made his calling and his election sure.

3 Therefore, we rejoiced in knowing of his end.

4 Nevertheless, we sorrowed to be parted from him, but I knew that I should soon go to him, which knowledge comforted mine heart.

5 And his son Abimelech was chosen to reign in his stead.

CHAPTER 155

THE following year Lot, my brother's son, died being one hundred and forty years old.

2 He, to, was a just man and accepted of the Lord, although he did not walk in all the ways of the ancients, for he had coveted his own property and separated from the community of God, therefore he must receive a just reward.

3 Nevertheless, the Lord loved him because he maintained his integrity, even in the midst of wicked Sodom, wherefore the Lord saved him and those of his household who would be saved from destruction and the Lord made of him also a mighty people.

CHAPTER 156

NOW, when my son Isaac was about to return unto me from the city of Shalom, the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Behold, in the city of Haran dwelleth Bethuel the son of thy brother Nahor who is dead.

2 Unto Bethuel hast been born Rebekah, who at this time is ten years of age.

3 Send now and fetch her as a wife to thy son Isaac, for thus have I appointed that she shall bear unto him the chosen seed.

[Isaac returned from Shalom, which city was not yet translated. Now it was time for Isaac to receive Rebekah as his wife.]

CHAPTER 157

SO I called unto me Eliezer, my trusted companion who had been with me since we had come out of the city of Shalom, and I said unto him, Put now thine hand under my thigh **[Eliezer actually placed his hand under Abraham's genitals and swore to Abraham and Abraham's posterity.]** and swear unto me before the Most High god that thou shalt go unto the city of Haran and bring thence Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor my brother to be a wife unto my son Isaac according to the word of the Lord, but if the maiden refuse to come with thee, thou shalt be free of this thine oath.

2 So Eliezer swore before the Most High God and departed from me in peace.

3 He also pursued his journey to Haran and found Rebekah, even as I had said, and returned with her after the return of my son Isaac from the city of Shalom.

[We read the full story in Genesis.]

4 Thus Isaac took Rebekah to wife when he was forty years old, he having four other wives **[The Bible doesn't mention any other wives for Isaac, but I suspect this account was written by a polygamist who wanted to promote and justify this doctrine every chance he got.];** but Rebekah he took to wife in the tent of Sarah.

5 And Rebekah bare no children; wherefore I knew that the Lord should work a marvelous work in her even as in Sarah before her.

6 Therefore, mine heart rejoiced in Rebekah, the wife of my son Isaac, for she was pure and virtuous like unto Sarah my beloved who had preceded me into the rest of the Lord.

CHAPTER 158

THIS same year I took to wife Keturah [**In Genesis, she is referred to as Abraham's wife, and referred to as his concubine in First Chronicles.**], the daughter of mine old friend Abinelech king of Gerar who was dead.

2 Keturah bare me six sons so that in all I received of the Lord eight sons and three hundred and twenty-eight daughters, being in all three hundred and thirty-six souls.

3 Thus did the Lord increase me greatly besides the many sons who were adopted to me.

4 And thus I increased continually before the Lord.

CHAPTER 159

AFTER nine years my son Isaac brought unto me his wife Rebekah for, she was yet barren.

2 And she said unto me, My father, surely, I know that my mother Sarah was barren for many years before she bare Isaac unto thee.

3 Wherefore, pray for me, that I, like Sarah, may conceive.

4 Therefore, I prayed over my daughter Rebekah, and I said unto Isaac, Thy mother Sarah bare thee after she received a blessing from my brother Abimelech king of Gerar.

5 Abimelech, son of Abimelech, reigneth now in the place of his father in Gerar, and he, too, is a mighty man of God.

6 Go ye in unto him that he may bless Rebekah and she shall conceive and bear unto thee two sons and the younger shall rule over the elder, but in the elder shall the word of the Lord also be fulfilled for through him shall I slay wicked Nimrod even as the Lord foretold at my birth.

7 So Isaac took Rebekah and went unto Gerar, unto Abimelech, son of Abimelech, who blessed her after the order of the ancients, and she conceived and bare unto Isaac two sons, even as I had said.

8 An on the eighth day, Isaac brought the last unto me to be named and the elder I called Esau, for he was covered with hair and I said, Surely, he shall be a mighty hunter before the Lord.

9 But the second I called Jacob, for I said, Surely the elder shall serve the younger.

[Sarah was blessed in some way by Abimelech, Sr. and she conceived. Likewise, Rebekah was blessed by Abimelech, Jr. and she also conceived.]

CHAPTER 160

WHEN my youngest son Shuach, whom Keturah had borne me (for she bare Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuach) was fifteen years of age, I called all of my sons unto me and instructed them in the ways of the Lord and blessed them and give unto them and each wife a goodly inheritance of property according to the instructions of the Lord and sent them away to inherit lands which the Lord had prepared for them.

2 Then I rested in peace knowing that I had done all the will of the Lord and that soon I should be gathered unto my fathers to be with Sarah and the righteous in the Paradise of God.

[Abraham sent away all his children except Isaac.]

CHAPTER 161

BEHOLD, I am Isaac, the son of Abraham, and I finish my father's record.

[Isaac finished up his father's record.]

2 For when the end of my father's sojourn among men had come, he called me unto him and said, my son, according to the commandment of God unto thee, I have appointed thee to be mine heir that all the authority I possess should rest with thee.

3 Thou knowest that the Lord is God in heaven and earth and we serve only him.

4 He hath many times preserved me from destruction when the evil ones would have destroyed me, for I always place my trust in him.

5 He brought me unto this land and said unto me, to thy seed will I give all this land and they shall inherit it when they shall keep my commandments, my statutes and my judgments that I have commanded thee and which I shall command them.

6 Now therefore my son, hearken unto my voice and keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, even as thou hast been instructed by me and by thy mother Sarah and by Shem an Eber.

7 Depart not from the holy order of God in any particular and remember always the mercies of our God and his blessing will never depart from thee.

8 Teach these things also unto thy children and thy children's children that they may receive the like blessings with us for all those who obey the law of the fathers will be blessed with the fathers.

[Continue to teach your children what I taught you.]

CHAPTER 162

THEN I covenanted with my father to do all things as he had said and to walk always in his ways.

2 And my father blessed me and mine house and he took my son Jacob into his tent, he being fifteen years old at this time, and instructed him for seven days and nights in the ways of the Lord.

[Abraham lived long enough to see his grandchildren.]

3 Thus did my father end his days and he died, being one hundred and seventy-five years of age.

4 And Ishmael and his other sons returned unto me and we did bury our father with Sarah my mother and all the inhabitants of the land did mourn over him for he was a righteous man who did good unto all.

5 And truly this was his testimony, that the Lord is God over all and those who serve him shall inherit peace in this life and eternal joy in the life to come. Amen.

[Thus, ends the writing of Abraham. Again, I ask that you pray for discernment as to which parts of this story are true, and which are not. It's a beautiful story that sheds light on some the more mysterious aspects of Abraham, and upon the Gospel of Abraham. Some parts are true. Some parts are probable or instructive, if not true.]

Father of the Faithful

“Noah, who gave warning of the flood; Shem, the great high priest; **Abraham, the father of the faithful**; Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, the great law-giver of Israel;” (D&C 138:41)

This title for Abraham is not just rhetorical. It is very rich in meaning.

This is the scripture which Martin Luther read, which started the reformation. “no man is justified by the law ... for, **The just shall live by faith.**” (Gal. 3:11).

But, this scripture was not original to Paul. He was quoting an Old Testament prophet: “**The just shall live by faith.**” (Hab. 2:4).

The Bible is the word of God, as far as it is translated correctly, but these verses are not translated correctly. When we compare the original Hebrew and Greek words which are both translated as “faith” in our modern Bibles. We can see that they are actually different words.

You don’t have to be Hugh Nibley or Gileadi or a language expert to do this. All you have to do is go to <http://www.elijah.com/lexicon.html> or <https://biblehub.com/> and look up the word or passage you are interested in. I did this and found the results below.

But, in general, if you run across a word in scripture that doesn’t “feel” quite right to you, or you don’t understand the word, or the Spirit prompts you to look further, then by all means, look up the word. You will find, as I did, that the most crucial words in the Gospel have been mistranslated. These online dictionaries cover the Bible only, but since the language of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price is borrowed from the Bible (and, unfortunately borrow the same mistranslations), the online dictionaries work for these books as well.

The original Hebrew word for *faith* in Habakkuk was *enuwnah* (Strong’s Word: H530). It means “faithfulness”. Everywhere in the Old Testament, where the word *faith* is used, the original Hebrew word used is *emuwn* (faithful) (H529) or *enuwnah* (faithfulness) (H530).

In the New Testament, wherever it mentions *faith* or *believe*, the original Greek word *pistis* (faith) (G402), or *pisteo* (verb: believe) is used.

What’s the difference? **Faithfulness** means “**firmness, steadfastness, fidelity, steadiness**”. **Faith** means “**a conviction of truth**”. Research into the Gospels and early teachings of Christ before the Greek gentiles got a hold of them shows that a vital principle was changed, and a plain and precious truth was removed.

These two quotes are from an author who has studied apocryphal writings of the teachings of Jesus (Yeshua), given in Hebrew and Aramaic. There are many differences in the meanings of words from the Old to the New Testaments. This is one of many which the author points out, and which we can easily see for ourselves by looking up the meanings of words in Strong’s online concordance.

Yeshua’s key term *emunah* meant “faithfulness, perseverance” [**pressing on**] in keeping the Ways of the [Father]—compassion, justice, wisdom, beauty, and all the other divine qualities that disciples were taught to emulate and exemplify in daily life [**virtues**]. This was translated

into Greek as *pistis*, trust, belief in Jesus as Divine Savior. **Yeshua's faithfulness, fidelity, perseverance, was misunderstood in Christian thought as magical belief that could heal the sick and move mountains. ... Yeshua did not need to advocate belief or trust in God. That was already embedded in Jewish culture.** *The Pre-Christian Teachings of Yeshua*, Lewis Keizer M.Div., Ph.D. (emphasis mine)

Aramaic *emunah*, "faithfulness, fidelity," later understood in gentile Greek New Testament as *pistis* meaning "belief." **Most of the teachings of Yeshua about "faith" in the New Testament mean faithfulness, fidelity, not belief. Yeshua did not teach creed or belief, but *halakah* or practice.** That is why the traditions from his brother James flatly state that "faith (*emunah*) without works (*mitzvot*) is dead (James 2.20)." **Faith is not merely belief, i.e., opinion or theological dogma and creed. It is thought, word, and deed in life.**

The only part of the New Testament that properly presents it is found in the "faith without works is dead" portion of the epistle attributed to James, the brother of Yeshua. This is one of the few places where Jewish-Christian Jesus tradition is preserved in the New Testament. *The Kabbalistic Words of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas*, Lewis Keizer M.Div., Ph.D. (emphasis mine)

We have been taught that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first principle of the Gospel. And Restoration teachings, for the most part, capture the true meaning of "faith" as a part of "faithfulness". So, while the word used is incorrect, the teachings about the word in the Lectures on Faith are correct.

Please understand that I am not advocating that we abandon *faith*, or even stop using the word. I am just going out of my way to emphasize the true and expanded meaning of *faithfulness*. The next few paragraphs explain why.

The word ***faith*** requires 7 lectures and some 60 pages to explain. Correct *faith* is an abstract term. *Faith* is easily corrupted to mean a religion, mere belief, blind faith, faith without works, or simply assent.

Faithfulness is easy for the average person to understand: faithful dog, faithful friend, faithful spouse, faithful in keeping a promise. Take a "faithful marriage" for example. Christ compares our relationship to Him as a marriage. There is a Bridegroom and a Bride. Christ compares our faithlessness to marriage infidelity: "going a whoring after other Gods". (Judges 2:17, Hosea 1:2)

Faithfulness, by its very nature implies trust and belief in God, which was embedded in Jewish culture. Faithfulness also implies being faithful to someone or something: a **covenant**. A **covenant** is an **agreement** which defines a **relationship**. We have learned to think of a relationship with in the Lord in terms of **Priesthood**.

We don't need to talk about faith and relationship as separate subjects. **Faithfulness** implies fidelity in **belief** and **action** (i.e., faith **with** works) with the **intention** to maintain and grow a **relationship** (Fellowship, Priesthood). You can't separate the two. When you are faithful to the terms of the covenant with the Lord, and as you demonstrate your faithfulness, (including your faith), the relationship deepens and strengthens.

How does power in the Priesthood come through faith? Power comes through your relationship with God.

How do you measure, judge, or evaluate that relationship with God? Faithfulness.

Did you know the Book of Mormon mentions *faith* 263 times, and *faithful* 41 times? But, to correctly translate the Old Testament, pre-Babylonian word for *faith*, the word should have been translated *faithfulness*, in keeping the Testament knowledge and understanding of the Jews, from whom the people of Lehi departed. Also, in the D&C, the word *faith* is mentioned 110 times, and *faithfulness* 119 times. How many people catch this? I didn't until I did a word search.

So, when you think faith, think faithfulness. When you teach faith, teach faithfulness. Faithfulness has a richer meaning: it implies faith and so much more.

How is Abraham the “father of the faithful”? When we receive the baptism of fire, baptism of the Holy Ghost, we become the adopted seed of Abraham. “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith **[faithfulness]**, the same are the children of Abraham.” (Gal 3:7)

As we develop our faith, our relationship with Christ grows, and we receive more Priesthood from Him.

D&C 84:33 For whoso is **faithful [Note the wording. We obtain Priesthood through faithfulness.]** unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken **[obtaining a relationship with the Lord]**, and the magnifying their calling **[receiving their calling and election and making it sure]**, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies **[translation or resurrection]**.

D&C 84:34 They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and **the seed of Abraham**, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.

D&C 84:35 And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord;

D&C 84:36 For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me; **[Have you covenanted to be a servant of Christ? Do you receive (accept) yourself as a servant of Christ.]**

D&C 84:37 And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father; [Second and Third Comforter]

D&C 84:38 And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him. **[The Father offers all that He has. Can we offer any less? He has far more to offer than we have, but think of yourselves as the widow and her mite.]**

D&C 84:39 **And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood.**

Then, we can say with Abraham: “Now, after the Lord had withdrawn from speaking to me, and withdrawn his face from me, I said in my heart: Thy servant has sought thee earnestly; now I have found thee;” (Abr. 2:12)

“And as I said unto Abraham concerning the kindreds of the earth, even so I say unto my servant Joseph: In thee and in thy seed shall the kindred of the earth be blessed.” (D&C 124:58) As the seed of Abraham, this promise applies to us as well. Through us and our seed all the kindred of the earth (not just Israel, but all mankind) will be blessed.

Note that in the temple, when we are presented to the Lord as the veil, we are introduced as “Adam, having been **true** and **faithful**, ...”.

Appendix

Additional scriptures to give you more insights about Abraham.

- “Wherefore, our father hath not spoken of our seed alone, but also of all the house of Israel, pointing to the covenant which should be fulfilled in the latter days; which covenant the Lord made to our father Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” (1 Nephi 15:18)
- And also with Joseph and Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham, your fathers, by whom the promises remain; (D&C 27:10)
- Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham; enter ye into my law and ye shall be saved. (D&C 132:32)
- They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. (John 8:39)
- Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. (Gal 3:6)
- Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. (James 2:21-23)
- But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend. (Isa 41:8)
- Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah [that] bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him. For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. (Isa. 51:2-3)
- Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old. (Mic. 7:20)
- Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth; O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen. He is the LORD our God: his judgments are in all the earth. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; (Ps 105:5-9)
- Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? (II Chron. 20:7)