

— A *Seek Me* GUIDEBOOK —

Old Testament

Notes from a class at the Institute of Religion
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Finding Christ in the Old Testament

Packet 2

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**Use as a side-by-side resource with
2026 Come Follow Me Old Testament Curriculum**

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1. Helpful (kind, thoughtful, and with the intent to uplift)
2. Christ-centered
3. True

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Thank you,
Holly



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Post a comment to the
online discussion

Summary of previous module

We need Christ and His covering, and His grace is sufficient.

— A *Seek Me* GUIDEBOOK —
Old Testament
Module Four
 THE TRUE AND LIVING WAY

Summary of this module

Jesus will help us find His higher way.

"...and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths..."

Isaiah 2:3

Review of principles learned in past modules:

Anything God gives, gives life and typifies Christ (2 Ne 11:4)

If you don't find Christ in the scriptures, you won't find life (John 5:39-40)

If you know the prophets, you know Christ (JST Luke 14:35-37)

When you taste bitter fruit, don't take another bite! Trade with Christ for fruit He offers from the Tree of Life.

Adam and Eve were clothed (covered) in coats of skins (Genesis 3:21)

The Way of God Part 1: The true and living way vs. a counterfeit way

The coats of skin versus the apron of fig leaves is one of several examples in the Old Testament of the Lord's way versus a way that resembles the Lord's way, but is not.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 14:6

God's way is the way of truth and life. Any other way is a counterfeit to God's way and does not give life.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55
:8-9

[Way: *derek* = way, road, distance, journey, manner]. Way is conceptually a road or path and includes elements of timing (distance), range or magnitude (journey), and behavior or method (manner). Sister Ann Madsen, a scholar of Isaiah, taught of Isaiah 55:8-9 and said, "**God is willing to help us find his higher way**" (*His Hand Is Stretched Out Still: The Lord's Eternal Covenant of Mercy*). One example of this is when Adam and Eve were sent forth from the Garden of Eden. They were no longer in God's presence, but God did not leave them alone to find the way back to Him. Adam and Eve prayed, and God answered them.

And Adam and Eve, his wife, called upon the name of the Lord, and they heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them...

Moses 5:4

Similarly, we on earth are away from Heavenly Parents' and Jesus's presence, and God has not left us alone to find our way back to Him. God has given us prophets, the ministering of angels, and the Holy Ghost. Through prophets, we are taught commandments. He has revealed ordinances as stepping stones along His way or path. Ordinances are **symbolic**. They are **ordained** of God. **Covenants** are in ordinances. For example, God commanded Adam and Eve to make an offering unto the Lord.

...he gave unto them commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord.

Moses 5:5

They followed the commandment and offered the firstlings of their flocks, as **ordained** of God, even though they did not understand what this offering symbolized.

And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth.

Moses 5
:6-7

An angel taught Adam and Eve that animal sacrifice is a **symbol** of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The atoning act of Jesus Christ covers our sins and our suffering, and it cost Jesus his life. As Adam and Eve offered the firstlings of their flocks as ordained of God, they were cutting a **covenant** with Him. The angel taught that when animal sacrifice was done in the name of Jesus Christ, it was part of repentance. Adam and Eve were to repent and call upon God in the name of Jesus Christ. In return, the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam and testified of the promise of redemption through Jesus Christ.

Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest **in the name of the Son**, and thou shalt **repent** and **call upon God** in the name of the Son forevermore. And in that day **the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam**, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever, **that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed**, and all mankind, even as many as will. Moses 5 :8-9

When any of us fall, we can repent and call upon God and be redeemed through Jesus Christ. The atonement of Jesus covers us. Animal sacrifice is no longer ordained of God. Now as an offering, He asks for a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

... in me is the law of Moses fulfilled. ... And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings. And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. 3 Nephi 9 :17, 19-20

— A counterfeit way

When God shows us how an ordinance is to be done, and we do it accordingly, we can draw power from it. When we do not do it accordingly, it is not accepted by God and there is no power in it. Cain and Abel each gave an offering to God. Abel's offering was accepted because it was done in the way God had ordained. Cain's was rejected because instead of an animal sacrifice, he offered fruit, which was not ordained of God.

... **Cain brought of the fruit of the ground** an offering unto the Lord. And **Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock** and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. Genesis 4 :3-5

An animal offering was the true and living way. An offering of fruit was a counterfeit way. The book of Moses includes additional details about Cain's choice:

And Cain loved Satan more than God. And Satan commanded him, saying: Make an offering unto the Lord. Moses 5:17-18

And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. But unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect. Now Satan knew this, and it pleased him. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. Moses 5 :19, 21

Cain loved Satan and it was Satan who influenced him to make a counterfeit offering. Cain chose a counterfeit offering and then was angry when God did not accept it. The Lord, in His mercy, said to Cain that he could still be accepted. He also explained that there would be a consequence if Cain continued following Satan's influence.

And the Lord said unto Cain: Why art thou wroth? Why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee; and except thou shalt hearken unto my commandments, I will deliver thee up, and it shall be unto thee according to his desire. Moses 5 :22-23

Cain did not choose God.

— Symbols and covenants of ordinances ordained of God and how they cover us

The ordinance of baptism by immersion. When we are baptized by immersion, every part of us must be covered in the waters of baptism.

And then shall ye **immerse them** in the water, and come forth again out of the water. 3 Nephi 11:26

Symbol: Every part of us can be covered by the atonement and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and we can be clean. When not by immersion, baptism cannot symbolize the covering given to us by Jesus Christ. **Covenant:** We promise to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, always remember Him, keep His commandments, serve Him to the end, and stand as witnesses of God at all times and places. In return, God promises a remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The ordinance of the sacrament. The ordinance of baptism makes us clean, and keeping covenants made during the sacrament keeps us clean.

“...The sacrament provides an opportunity for Church members to ponder and **remember with gratitude** the life, ministry, and Atonement of the Son of God. ...Part of this ordinance is a promise to **remember Him always** and a **witness of individual willingness to take upon oneself the name of Jesus Christ** and to keep His commandments. In partaking of the sacrament and making these commitments, Church members **renew the covenant they made at baptism. In return,**

the Lord renews the promised remission of sin and enables Church members to “always have his Spirit to be with them.”
The Spirit’s constant companionship is one of the greatest gifts of mortality.

“Sacrament”, Topics and Questions section, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints website

Symbol: The bread and water are symbols of Christ’s body and blood. These emblems are covered with a cloth on the sacrament table. **Covenant:** As we partake of the bread and water, we remember how they symbolize Jesus Christ. We remember that Jesus Christ can cover us, and we commit to take on His name. In return, He promises a remission of sin and enables us to have His Spirit.

Participation in the ordinance of the sacrament covers us in Christ. We can take and put on Christ’s name similar to how we might put on a blanket, and, like a blanket, it covers us. As we do so, we receive the blessing of having the companionship of the Holy Ghost. There are many gifts of the Spirit that flow into our lives through the Holy Ghost, and those gifts can play a protective role in our lives.

Ordinances in the temple. Temple ordinances are symbolic of many things, and we make multiple covenants with God in temples.

Symbol: All temple covenants point to Jesus Christ. **Covenants:** We covenant to: (a) obey God’s commandments; (b) sacrifice to support God’s work and repent with a broken heart and contrite spirit; (c) exercise faith in Jesus Christ, make and keep covenants with God, endure to the end, and love; (d) have physically intimate relations only with the person to whom we are legally married as per God’s law; (e) dedicate our time, talents, and everything with which the Lord has blessed us to building up Jesus Christ’s Church on the earth. In return, we receive many gifts. Some include: greater knowledge of the Lord’s purposes and teachings; power to do all that God wants us to do; divine guidance and protection as we serve the Lord, our families, and others; and increased hope, comfort, and peace. (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website, “About the Temple Endowment”)

How do temple ordinances cover us? How do we draw strength and protection from covenants made there?

*The temple lies at the center of strengthening our faith and spiritual fortitude because **the Savior and His doctrine are the very heart of the temple.** Everything taught in the temple, through instruction and through the Spirit, **increases our understanding of Jesus Christ.** His essential ordinances **bind us to Him** through sacred priesthood covenants. Then, as we keep our covenants, **He endows us with His healing, strengthening power.***

Russell M. Nelson, The Temple and your Spiritual Foundation, General Conference, October 2021

Jesus Christ is the heart of the temple. He is in our covenants, and we are, too. Temple covenants bond us to Jesus Christ, and in that relationship, a lot of things can happen. As we honor our covenants, we receive gifts of knowledge, power, guidance, protection, hope, comfort, and peace. We want these gifts!

— The ark: The true and living way

*Make thee an **ark** of **gopher** wood; **rooms** shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt **pitch** it within and without with **pitch**.* Genesis 6:14

The Proto-Indo-European root of the word "ark" is *h₂erk-* which means: to hold, guard, protect. "Gopher," derives from an unused root, "probably meaning to house in"; thus, gopher wood is a wood that houses, or wood that is a "dwelling tree". "Rooms" is translated from a Hebrew word meaning nests, which are also dwellings. Pitch is in this verse two times and is translated from two different words. "Pitch" (1) is a verb from the word *kāpār*, pronounced *kaw-far'*, meaning to cover, purge, make an atonement, make reconciliation, cover over with pitch. You pitch something to keep water out. "Pitch" (2) is a noun. It is a sealing agent. It's like a sap with nutrients (feeds) and which scabs (heals). It comes from a Hebrew word meaning the price of a life, ransom, or asphalt, pitch (as a covering). The ark is pitched, within and without, with pitch; both innard and outward are covered, or internally and externally.

*A **window** shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; **with lower, second, and third stories** shalt thou make it.* Genesis 6:16

Window = *šōhar* = noon, sun, bright, light, happiness, blessing, window, roof. Root = *šāhar* = to press out oil, glisten. Also related to oil as producing light or to the process of anointing with oil. Some believe it is a luminous, precious stone or gem that shone brightly and provided light inside the ark.

And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort **shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.** Genesis 6:19

Putting all of this together, we learn that God asked Noah to make a covenant place with dwellings for males and females to live in and to be covered and sealed from death. The ark is symbolic of the temple; it has three levels and teaches about the living tree or tree of life. The temple is a place of salvation and sealing with reminders of the importance of letting our sins be covered by the atonement of Jesus Christ. Couples enter temples to make covenants to be sealed together to dwell and live together forever.

— The tower: The counterfeit way

In contrast, the tower of Babel was made with bricks of white clay that were thoroughly burned. The Hebrew words for, “burn them thoroughly” represent destructive burning, as in burning down a city, or as in human sacrifice to idols (BLB). For mortar, they used slime: a red liquid that bubbles up from the earth and boils, foams, and ferments (BLB). The mortar was smeared on to seal the bricks and cover them in red.

And they said one to another, Go to, let us make **brick**, and **burn them thoroughly**. And they had **brick for stone**, and **slime** had they for mortar. Genesis 11:3

— Two cities in contrast

People in the city that became Babel were building a city and a tower that would reach to heaven to give themselves a name or to make a name for themselves.

... let us **build us a city** and a tower, whose top may **reach unto heaven**; and let us **make us a name**, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. Genesis 11:4

Enoch also built a city. People in this city were given a name by God (Moses 7:18).

... And it came to pass in his days, that he **built a city** that was **called** the City of Holiness, even Zion. Moses 7:19

Enoch’s teachings were after the order of God, meaning he taught according to divine authority and spiritual power rather than human wisdom. Enoch taught God’s way, not the counterfeit way. He taught repentance, remission of sins, and baptism. Those who were baptized took upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ. Unlike people in the city of Babel, they kept covenants and became Zion; they received a name and reached Heaven. When Adam was baptized, a voice came out of heaven saying,

Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. ... And thou art after **the order of him** who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity. Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; **and thus may all become my sons.** Moses 6 :67-68

All people can make and keep covenants after the order of God, being one with God, and become sons and daughters of God. When we follow the Lord’s way, the way of truth and life, we can walk with God.

And Enoch and all his people walked with God, and he (God) dwelt in the midst of Zion; Moses 7:69

Summary of this module	Summary of the next module
God’s way of truth and life that leads back to Him includes elements of timing, range, thought, behavior, and manner or method. In opposition are counterfeit ways that can distract or deceive.	God establishes his covenant with Abraham’s family.

Takeaways and questions for reflection:

- Pray for the gift of the spirit of discernment to recognize the Lord’s way and the counterfeit way.
- In what way(s) can you better fortify yourself against counterfeits?
- Are there counterfeits already in your life you might be unaware of that are impeding your progress?
- In what ways do temple covenants protect against deception or confusion?
- In the last days, “even the very elect might be deceived.” Prophets and apostles have taught us to be prepared for what lies ahead - not only to defend ourselves and our families, but to empower us to go on the offense. Implement those strategies.

Summary of previous module

God's way of truth and life is the way to return to live with Him.

— A *Seek Me* GUIDEBOOK —
Old Testament
Module Five
 MAKING COVENANTS

Summary of this module

God can make anyone the family of Abraham who wants Him as their God.

"I sought for the blessings of the fathers"

Abraham 1:2

The Way of God Part 2: Making covenants - A promise and a blessing to all

Abraham sought for the blessings of the fathers (Abraham 1:2). **Who are the fathers?** The faithful ancestors of Abraham who entered into covenants with God, such as Adam, Abel, Enoch, and Noah.

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 shew thee:

Genesis 12:1

Abraham said his father had turned from the way of God and had chosen to offer him up as a child sacrifice to an idol god (Abraham 1:5, 7). When he was placed on the altar of the false god, Elkenah, to be sacrificed, Abraham prayed. An angel came and unloosed his bands (Abraham 1:15). Jehovah delivered him.

... 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 kinsfolk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of; 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.

Abraham 1:16, 18

Who is Jehovah? Jehovah is the covenant name for the God of Israel (Bible Dictionary). Jehovah is Jesus Christ. He initiated the making of covenants with individuals in the Old Testament. In Abraham's case, Jehovah heard his prayer and knew the desires of his heart and covenanted to deliver and lead him. He said he would "put His name on" Abraham, and Abraham would be covered by His power. **What does it mean to "put on" Christ's name?** When someone enters into a covenant with God, they take on His name. As a symbol of this, when Abraham, then Abram, covenanted with God, a form of the name of God was added to His name. *El* and *Jah* are names of God. *Abram* became *Abraham* by adding 'ha' (a form of *jah*). His wife, Sarai, also got a new name, which is evidence that she also entered into a covenant with God. *Sarai* became *Sarah* by adding 'ah' (a form of *jah*). In our day, a power of attorney (POA) is a legal document that authorizes another person to take actions in your name. When we enter into a covenant with God, we take on His name, and we can draw on His power as we act in His name. As God established His covenant with Abraham, he used the phrase, "...with me, thee, and thy seed after thee..." (Genesis 12). Jehovah's covenant relationship would be with Abraham *and* Abraham's family. **Who is Abraham's family?** "The children of Israel" or "Israelites" is another name for this covenant family.

"[T]he very name of Israel refers to a person who is willing to let God prevail in his or her life. ...The word **willing** is crucial to this interpretation of Israel. We all have our agency. We can choose to be of Israel, or not. We can choose to let God prevail in our lives, or not. We can choose to let God be the most powerful influence in our lives, or not. ...Jacob, the grandson of Abraham...demonstrated that he was willing to let God prevail in his life. In response, God changed Jacob's name to Israel. ...God then promised Israel that all the blessings that had been pronounced upon Abraham's head would also be his."

Russell M. Nelson, Let God Prevail, General Conference, October 2020

Any person who accepts the covenants that God makes with them and who *lets* Jehovah prevail in their lives is adopted into Abraham's family, becomes the seed of Abraham, and is a child of the covenant.

Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the **adoption**, and the glory, and the **covenants**, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the **promises**; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. ... For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: **but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.**

Romans 9:4-7

When a person is baptized in the true and living way ordained by God, they are adopted into Abraham's family.

The covenant race

Abraham is known as the “founder of the covenant race” (Bible Dictionary). Tribe, clan, and dynasty are synonyms of “race” and all represent the “bigness” of family. So a *covenant race* is a large, multigenerational family made up of individuals who are covenant makers and covenant keepers. In Old Testament times, the oldest son, solely because he was born first, had the birthright, which was a legal right to inherit a double portion of the estate and the leadership role in the family. This is called primogeniture. The system of inheritance in the covenant race is different from the culture of that time. **In God’s family, Jesus Christ is the firstborn; He gets the firstborn blessings. He is generous, and as part of the covenants He establishes with someone, He promises to share everything He has.** In the covenant race, a birthright blessing isn’t determined by birth order, but rather by keeping the covenants Jehovah establishes. The unique way Abraham and his descendants passed down the birthright in the Old Testament serves as a type for the inheritance we receive from Jesus Christ. If the eldest child “threw off” their covenants and acted in ways that were not congruent with the true and living way established by God, then the birthright blessing and the temporal things that went with it were given to the next oldest, and so on, until it rested on a child who, in faith, lived according to the way of truth and life. One example of this is Jacob’s twelve sons. Joseph’s coat of colors was a symbol that he had received the birthright blessing even though he was born second to last. This may explain why his older brothers were furious with him.

The following are principles of inheritance in the covenant race that are distinct from cultural primogeniture in Old Testament times:

1. People can be adopted into the covenant race.
2. All who enter into and remain in the covenant framework, sons and daughters, receive the right of the firstborn.
3. The right of the firstborn is not a double portion; It is all that the father has.

In summary, a person is adopted into the covenant race by accepting the covenants God establishes with them. By participating with God in their covenants, they receive the inheritance He gives.

Making Covenants

When speaking about Alma and those with him at the waters of Mormon in Mosiah 18, Henry B. Eyring drew attention to the beginning of Alma’s invitation to them to be baptized in verse 8 and said,

*Listen to the words with which he began: “As ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people.” Alma knew the covenant was not like a business deal—“you do this for God, and God will do this for you”—but it was **an opportunity for them to become his, to become God’s people.** Every covenant with God is an opportunity to draw closer to him. To anyone who reflects for a moment on what they have already felt of the love of God, to have that bond made stronger and that relationship closer is an irresistible offer. Alma knew the people he taught had felt and recognized the love of God. We may not recognize it, but **when our faith lets us see the evidence of God’s love in his blessings, we will be as eager to make a covenant to draw closer to him** as were the people at the waters of Mormon.*

Henry B. Eyring, *Making Covenants with God*, BYU Speeches, September 8, 1996

When Jehovah establishes covenants with us, He invites us into a relational framework. This framework ensures we receive the support needed to learn our capacity and to inherit all promised blessings. **What has Jehovah promised?** Protection, progression, power, promotion, presence, prominence, prosperity, plenty, to name a few. These are the same promises and blessings Jehovah established with Abraham and Sarah, and this group of blessings is known as the Abrahamic Covenant. And because a covenant is a joint venture, Jehovah not only blessed them, but He was with them every step of the way to help and to see them through.

The Abrahamic Covenant

Abraham and Sarah were promised: (a) land as far as the eye could see - to them and their children, and they would have it forever; (b) innumerable children - as many as the dust of the earth (Gen 13:16), the stars in the sky (Gen 15:5), and the sands on the seashore (Gen 22:17) - all of these are examples of things that cannot be counted; (c) that they would be great and be a blessing and that in them all families would be blessed.

*... Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the **land** which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.*

Genesis 13
:14-15, 17

And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.	Genesis 13:17
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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 him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed	Genesis 12 :2-3
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After Abraham's experience of being asked to sacrifice his son and proving his willingness, the promises were restated, and Abraham was promised that in his *seed* would all nations be blessed:

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; 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.	Genesis 22 :15-18
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Jesus Christ's ancestry is linked to Abraham.

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.	Matthew 1:1
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The seed of Abraham through whom all nations are blessed is Jesus Christ. In fulfillment of this blessing, Jesus Christ, extends the spiritual blessings of the covenant and salvation to all people by faith. It follows that redemption is also a promise or blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant.

— Faith of the forefathers and foremothers

Abraham was promised land, yet during his lifetime the only property he owned was a small field with a cave in which he buried his wife. Based on this, it does not seem that during their lifetime Abraham and Sarah received the blessing of land that Jehovah promised to them. **Why, then, and how, did they remain faithful to God?** They activated their covenantal relationship with Jehovah. Covenants are the perfect framework for God to establish a bond and build a committed relationship with us. Even as we enter and keep covenants by faith, our covenantal relationship can remain distant and our promised blessings can remain unappropriated. Through faith and hope we can activate our *covenantal relationship*, and it becomes personal and transformative. Walking in faith, we consistently strive to strengthen our trust in Jehovah. We hope He will act for us as He has for others, in line with His promises. We persist in this way until we fully believe. This combination of faith and hope activates our covenantal relationship with Him, and from that comes unlimited power. There isn't power in our covenants, per se; the power is from Jehovah, and *He* is in our covenants.

Hebrews chapter 11 is a sermon about the faith of the forefathers and foremothers, and includes multiple examples of people who activated their covenantal relationship with Jehovah. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses are mentioned by name. They understood the connection between faith and hope and their covenants. They understood that the covenantal framework was a relational framework structured to help them create, maintain, and strengthen their connection with Jehovah. The framework acted as a guide for communication, trust-building, and interaction, allowing their relationship with Jehovah to thrive through changes and challenges. Having made covenants with Jehovah, they were bonded to Him. They knew that once Jehovah makes a promise, it is eternal and unchanging. They were secure in placing their faith in Him. Expectations about the timing of the fulfillment of covenant promises and blessings were secondary to staying faithful to their covenants.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises , but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. ... But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly ; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city .	Hebrews 11 :13
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Their lives were living testimonies that they believed Jehovah when he promised them the inheritance of the firstborn by covenant. Even when blessings pertinent to that covenant would come on a future date, having made covenants with Jehovah, they would be heirs with Him. With faith and hope, they activated their covenantal relationship with Jehovah and were sustained by His power. Everyone Jehovah establishes His covenant with can do the same. In summary, remembering that Jehovah initiates covenants with us can strengthen our bond with Him. Believing that once He promises something, it is eternal, enables us to feel

secure in our relationship with Him. We can feel assurances of what He has promised us, even when the timing of their fulfillment is “afar off”.

Ponder: Do I have promises afar off? Am I persuaded of them? Do I embrace them?

— God’s promises of land and seed are not about the stuff

Jehovah’s promises are not about the “stuff.” One person who knew this is Job. He lived prosperously, but his relationship with God wasn’t based on his “stuff.” He knew God. So when everything was taken from him, he stayed in his relationship with God. Temporal “stuff” such as land and children can be enjoyed during life on this earth. We will live in heaven a whole lot longer than we will live on this earth. Heavenly land and posterity can be enjoyed forever. And a good relationship with Jesus Christ is the way to eternal land and posterity. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6).

Abraham and Sarah are forefathers and foremothers of a multitude, and their posterity will inherit the temporal land designated to become theirs. But God’s promise to them was not about temporal land and seed. And it wasn’t only about heavenly land and seed. It was about the relationships inherent in receiving those blessings. It was about protection, progression, and power.

And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father’s kingdom; therefore **all that my Father hath shall be given unto him.** DC 84:38

Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and **see the salvation of the Lord with you,** O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: **for the Lord will be with you.** 2 Chronicles 20:17

And **none of them that my Father hath given me shall be lost.** DC 50:42

For all who make and keep covenants with God, He will fight their battles and none shall be lost. With Abraham and Sarah, we are joint-heirs with Christ and will receive all that the Father has. Receiving promised land, heavenly posterity, and the inheritance of the firstborn are “afar off, but we don’t need to wait to receive the power, peace, and confidence that comes from an activated covenantal relationship with Jehovah. That can happen today. Have faith and believe in the promises of God. Entering into covenants with Jehovah are about honoring Him, being grateful for Him, and being *with* Him.

Summary of this module	Summary of the next module
The covenant Jehovah establishes with us is a relational framework.	God’s covenant children will be tested to prove that they will stay with the covenants they have made.

Takeaways and questions for reflection:

- Are we seeking the blessings of the fathers?
- How can you more fully activate your covenantal relationship with Jesus Christ?
- In what ways can you focus less on “the stuff” and more on building a covenantal relationship?
- In addition to salvatory covenants such as baptism and temple covenants, Jehovah made personal covenants with Adam, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham. They each received at least one promise with a blessing that was specifically for them. Patriarchal blessings include statements that can be classified as “a promise with a blessing.” Do you consider those promises to be covenantal? If so, how can more attention be given to those? Review your patriarchal blessing to find yours.
- General conference promises can be in covenant format, for example, when President Nelson asked members to refer to the church by its proper name, He promised that the Lord would pour out blessings. Was that promise just from Pres Nelson, or was he speaking in behalf of the Lord in a covenant form?

Summary of previous module

We can be persuaded by promises afar off.

— A *Seek Me* GUIDEBOOK —
Old Testament
Module Six
 KEEPING COVENANTS

Summary of this module

We can choose to stand with Jehovah, come what may.

"And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed..."

Genesis 22:19

The Way of God Part 3: Keeping covenants - Ready to listen and obey

In Genesis 12-17, there is an “unrolling” of Jehovah’s covenant with Abraham and Sarah. Focusing on the promise related to having children: Abram was told he would be a great nation (Genesis ch. 12). Abram and Sarai were told their posterity would be innumerable (ch. 13). Abram was told that although he had no children at the time, his heir was yet-to-be born (ch. 15). Sarai’s surrogate had a son named Ishmael (ch. 16). This may have been considered a fulfilment of the promise in Genesis 15 about an heir. Their names were changed to Abraham and Sarah, and they were told that Sarah would birth a son (ch. 17). Isaac was born to Sarah (ch. 21).

In Chapter 12, when they learned that a great nation would come from them, it is unlikely that Abraham and Sarah could have guessed the way it would happen. The promise was given when they were young and able to birth children. In Chapter 21, they were 100 and 90 years old, and they were “past the age” of bearing children. And yet, that is when the Lord fulfilled His promise. We learn from these chapters that things related to covenants need to be done in the right way (His way, the true and living way), in the right place (the place He will show you), and in the right time (His time).

Worship in the right way and in the right place

In Genesis 12 Abraham (still Abram at that time) was living in Haran. He was told to leave his home, and that he would become a great nation. He left, and as he sojourned, or traveled, he built 4 altars. First he traveled to Shechem and **“there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him”** (Genesis 12:7). Then he traveled ~30 miles south to a mountain between Beth-el and Hai, and **“there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord”** (Genesis 12:8). Due to a famine, he went to Egypt, and afterward, he returned to this altar he had built on the mountain (Genesis 13:4). Next he traveled ~25 miles south to the plain of Mamre in Hebron and **“built there an altar unto the Lord”** (Genesis 13:18). When he lived near Beer-sheba, he planted a grove in which to worship and pray (Genesis 21:33). It is clear from these verses that during this time, Abraham was worshipping in God’s way, which is the way that Adam and Eve had been commanded to worship when they left the Garden of Eden. Also like Adam and Eve, he communed with God at altars (the right place). In God’s way and place, Abraham called upon God and was visited by Him.

Learning to live in our covenants

During this time, Abram was also growing in his understanding of his covenants with Jehovah. Abram had no children, and in the culture of the time, his estate would have gone to the head steward of his estate. He asked God about this and learned that his heir would not be his steward; instead it would be a not-yet-born son (Genesis 15:4). His wife, Sarai, was not able to have children. Culturally, Old Testament society was critical of women who could not have children, and to help that circumstance, surrogacy was legal. Hagar became Sarai’s surrogate. When Hagar conceived, she treated Sarai with contempt. Sarai “dealt firmly with her,” and Hagar fled (Genesis 16). God spoke to her, and she returned. Abram was 86 years old when Ishmael was born. When Abram was 99 years old, his name was changed to Abraham, and he was told that Sarai, who was 90, would have a son. Due to their ages, this sounded preposterous, and Abraham laughed. Notice evidence in these verses that this would occur according to God’s timing.

*And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, **and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?** And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him*

*Genesis 17
:15-21*

for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee **at this set time in the next year.**

Sarah's response was similar to Abraham's:

Therefore Sarah laughed within herself...And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? **Is any thing too hard for the Lord?** At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; **but thou didst laugh.**

Genesis 18
:12-15

They were learning that relative to Jehovah fulfilling covenants, nothing is too difficult for the Lord.

Becoming an heir versus parting gifts

Ishmael was 14 years old when Isaac was born. Several years later, when Isaac was weaned, there was a feast. Weaning was a milestone to be celebrated because in ancient cultures, surviving the early years was precarious. When an heir was able to eat solid food, it meant they had survived infancy and had overcome a major hurdle to becoming an heir. The celebration of this milestone toward heirship may have been difficult for teenage Ishmael. He mocked Isaac. This was not innocent play. It was akin to persecution. Although it grieved him, Abraham gave Hagar and Ishmael bread and a bottle of water and sent them away (Genesis 21). When they ran out of water, God supplied life-sustaining water for them. He also promised them that Ishmael's descendants would be numerous and influential. Ishmael became the father of twelve sons, each of them princes, or tribal leaders, of a nation (Genesis 25:12-16).

Before Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael away:

Wherefore she [Sarah] said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for **the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son**, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. 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 hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; **for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.** And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

Genesis 21
:10-13

God said Isaac was the heir in the covenant family line. As Isaac chose to stay true to the covenant Jehovah established with him, he would receive all that the Father had. In comparison, Ishmael, who persecuted the covenant heir, would not. He was given gifts at their parting. This is reconfirmed a few chapters later:

And **Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.** But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham **gave gifts, and sent them away** from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.

Genesis 25
:5-6

Obeys and sacrifice in the right way and in the right place

For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we..., but also all the holy prophets which were before us. They believed in Christ and worshiped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name. And **for this intent we keep the law of Moses, it pointing our souls to him; and for this cause it is sanctified unto us for righteousness, even as it was accounted unto Abraham in the wilderness to be obedient unto the commands of God in offering up his son Isaac, which is a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son.**

Jacob 4
:4-5

The Law of Moses included the ordinance of animal sacrifice in remembrance of Jesus Christ who would sacrifice Himself so all could live. Because animal sacrifice was a reminder of Christ, it was accounted unto them for righteousness. As a counterfeit, when Abraham was bound on an altar to be sacrificed to a false God - that sacrifice was not of God. In Genesis 22, Abraham was asked by God to tie Isaac to an altar and hold a knife over his son. Because God was in it, it was accounted unto him for righteousness, or righteousness was credited to him. Jesus Christ can cover a person's sin with His own righteousness, and righteousness is accounted to them. In other words, Jesus' perfect righteousness is legally credited to a person, making them acceptable to God. When God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, for Jesus' righteousness to be credited to him, it had to be in God's way, in God's time, and in the right place. God told him on which mountain it would transpire.

And [God] said, Take now thy son, thine only son 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 which I will tell thee of.** Genesis 15:4

What makes this place significant? This is the place upon which Solomon's temple would be built (Bible Dictionary). Some religious scholars have said Mount Moriah is in the same mountain range as Golgotha, the place where Jesus Christ was crucified. If this is true, there is a type in it: Moriah is a place of death and suffering of the Son. Isaac is the only son of Abraham born in the covenant. Jesus Christ is the only begotten son of God. This story is begging to be interpreted. In it are many types for Christ, or foreshadowing.

Christ's experience and Abraham and Isaac's experience Genesis 22

Jesus Christ is the Only Begotten Son And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son 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 which I will tell thee of. (v.2)	Triumphant entry of Jesus Christ on a donkey 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, (v.3)
The right place and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. (v.3)	Three days is a crowning point in God's timing Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. (v.4)
At Gethsemane Jesus said to Peter, James, and John, abide here as I go pray And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. (v.5)	A wood cross was laid on Jesus And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. (v.6)
The right place And they came to the place which God had told him of; (v.9)	In God's plan, His Son went like a lamb as an offering so all could be saved And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. (v.8)
In God's way and Abraham built an altar there, (v.9)	The order of God and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. (v.9)
Sacrifice the firstlings of the flock in similitude of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. (v.13)	"The Lord will provide" And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. (v.14)

In Genesis 22:1, the word tempt means to test or try by feeling or smelling, and it is synonymous with, 'to prove.' In the Bible, "to be proven" means having one's faith, character, or obedience tested, refined, and demonstrated to be genuine or authentic, affirming their faithfulness to God. In the command to sacrifice Isaac, who was being proven? Both Abraham and Isaac were proven in this event. This father and son duo are types for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, and the event foreshadows what had to take place for all to be saved. In the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who was being proven? Answer: Both Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Certainly, both of them felt big feelings during that event. This was likely also true of Abraham and Isaac.

Isaac is a type for Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ was proven in His sacrifice of Himself. The Book of Josephus says that Abraham was 126 years old and Isaac was at least 25 years old. Based on strength alone, Isaac could have won a physical fight with his father. Isaac was complicit in Abraham fulfilling the command to sacrifice him. This was a test for both of them, a concept characterized in a phrase in verses 6 and 8: "they went, both of them together." Maybe in this set of verses, Abraham explained to Isaac his command from God and shared with his son his strong belief that because of the promise of his covenant, God could raise him up from death.

A turning point

A chiasmus is a literary device utilized by ancient Hebrew writers to emphasize a central point in the middle of a structure such as A-B-X-B-A. The most crucial message, located at the center, was typically a "crux" or turning point, which, in many cases, is Jesus Christ. Genesis 22:6-9 is a chiasmus:

And Abraham *took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son (A); ...*
and they went both of them together. (B)

And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, *My father: ...where is the lamb for a burnt offering? (X)*

And Abraham said, *My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: (X)*
so they went both of them together. (B)

And they came to the place which God had told him of; 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. (A)*

In this moment, Abraham is walking faithfully in his covenantal relationship with Jehovah, and Isaac is watching and learning from his father's example. Adding one word to the center of this chiasmus changes the message: Isaac asked his father, "where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" and Abraham answered, "God will provide himself as a lamb for a burnt offering." Abraham could have added, "Isaac, in this, you are a type for Christ, and, like Him, you are the offering." Abraham may have, in this moment, shared his testimony written of in Hebrews 11 that he knew God could raise Isaac from death. The center of this chiasmus was a turning point for both Abraham and Isaac to choose to stay in the course of their covenants made with Jehovah, or to stand with Jehovah - come what may.

I am ready to listen and obey

Verses 1, 7, and 11 all have forms of the statement, "Here am I." An Isaiah scholar, Ann Madsen, taught that the phrase, "Here am I," is the response a servant would give to his master or a son to his father. It is said by someone calling attention to himself or herself as one who is ready to listen and obey. It is the same phrase used by Jesus Christ when he volunteered to be the Savior of all.

And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. Abraham 3:27
 And another answered and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first.

Jehovah will see to all things that are His

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. Genesis 22:14

As a covenant people, there are many general and personal covenants Jesus establishes with us. One Christian minister and scholar translates Jehovah Jireh as, "The LORD will see to it," or "In the mountain of the LORD, it will be seen to" (retrieved from: <https://www.logos.com/grow/hall-jehovah-jireh/>). As we keep our covenant with Jehovah, and as we meet Him in His high places, He will see to *all* that He has promised us, and we will learn that He really is all that He says He is. When we fully do our part to keep our covenants, or to stay in our covenantal relationship with Jehovah, then, paraphrasing Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, some blessings will come soon, some will come late, and some won't come until heaven, but for the faithful, as it was with Abraham and Sarah, blessings *will* come.

Summary of this module	Summary of the next module
Jehovah will teach us His way to live in our covenants.	Like Jacob, we all need to "put on" Christ.

Takeaways and questions for reflection:

- Outside of baptismal/temple covenants, are there other personal covenants that the Lord wants to make with you? Or already has?
- Have you convinced yourself that a thing the Lord has already promised you is too hard for Him to fulfill?
- Are there any recurring doubts or fears that have plagued you that you could sacrifice on the altar?
- What types of counterfeit covenants does Lucifer try to influence people to make with him?
- In what ways can you do better at being at the right place at the right time for the right reasons?
- Are you also ready to listen and obey?

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;

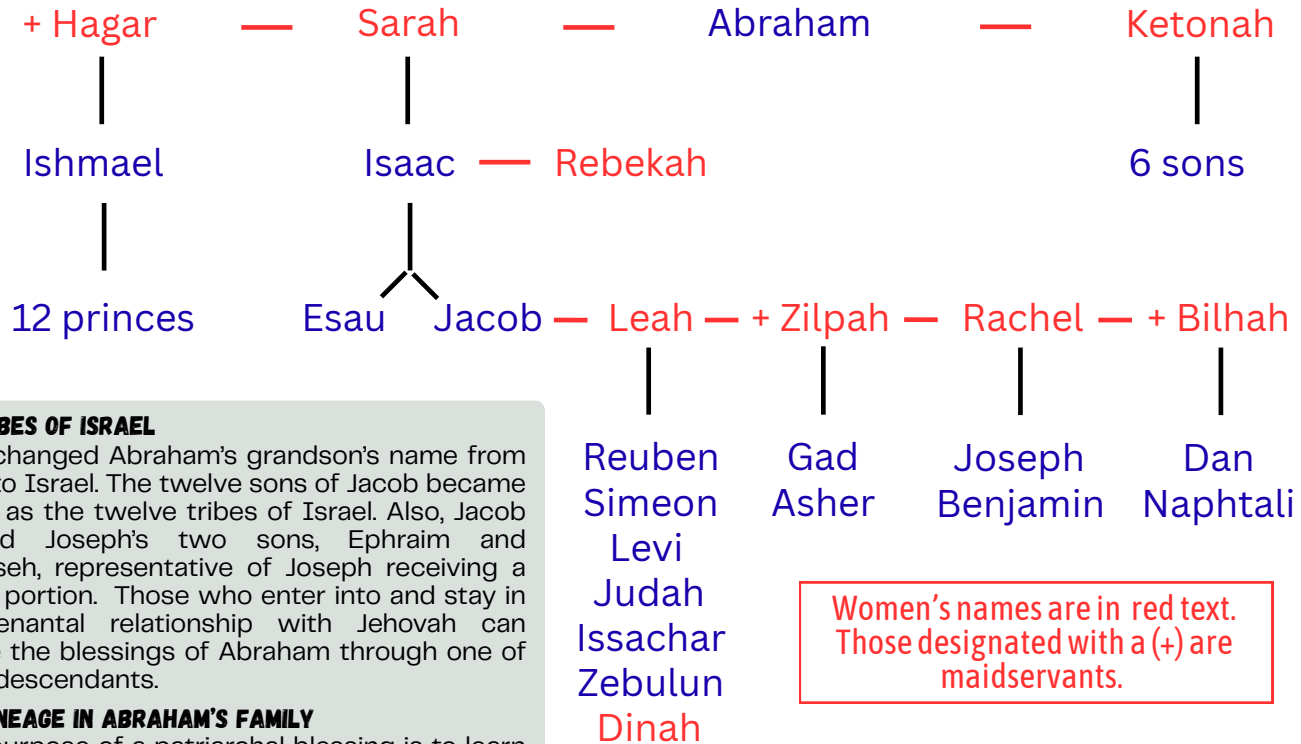
Abraham 2:10

A Seek Me GUIDEBOOK OLD TESTAMENT Context & Study

THE FAMILY TREE OF ABRAHAM

Summary

Jehovah told Abraham and Sarah many things about their posterity. Who descended from Abraham?



THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

God changed Abraham's grandson's name from Jacob to Israel. The twelve sons of Jacob became known as the twelve tribes of Israel. Also, Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, representative of Joseph receiving a double portion. Those who enter into and stay in a covenantal relationship with Jehovah can receive the blessings of Abraham through one of these descendants.

YOUR LINEAGE IN ABRAHAM'S FAMILY

One purpose of a patriarchal blessing is to learn lineage, or the family line which connects a person to Abraham and all of the firstborn blessings. A patriarch declares the tribe through which the blessings of Abraham will be received by each person.

This declaration of lineage shows a family line through which the individual can inherit the promised blessings of Abraham. It also reminds a faithful person of the spiritual responsibilities he or she has as a descendant of Abraham.

Topics and Questions,
Patriarchal Blessings

One of the primary reasons we receive a patriarchal blessing is to help us more fully understand who we are as the posterity of Abraham and to recognize the responsibility that rests upon us.

David A. Bednar, Becoming a Missionary,
Ensign, Nov. 2005, 47

In our day we are privileged to receive patriarchal blessings and learn of our connection to the ancient patriarchs. ...Do you see the importance of your patriarchal blessing? ... It is precious. It is personal scripture to you. It declares your special lineage. It reminds you of your linkage with the past. And it will help you realize your future potential. Literally, you can lay claim upon the Lord for fulfillment of those blessings through your faithfulness.

Russell M. Nelson, Thanks for the Covenant,
BYU Speeches - Devotional, Nov. 22, 1988

Women's names are in red text.
Those designated with a (+) are
maidservants.

SOLUTIONS TO INFERTILITY IN ANCIENT TIMES

In Old Testament times, when a woman was not able to have children, their maidservant became a wife to their husband. These women were called concubines. This arrangement was a form of surrogacy, in that legally, a child born to a concubine was legally considered to be a child of the primary wife.

USING YOUR LINEAGE AS A GUIDE

Obtaining and reviewing your patriarchal blessing are important steps in learning your own connection to Israel.

Knowing your lineage can be a helpful guide in your life, because belonging to one of the twelve tribes brings the blessings and missions specific to each tribe.

About Patriarchal Blessings Ensign, March 2004

TRIBES HAVE PROPHESIED, SPECIFIC MISSIONS

When you have identified the tribe through which you will receive Abraham's blessings, you can learn about the blessings, counsel, and warnings that Israel gave to his sons and that Moses gave to each tribe are in Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33, respectively.

Most resources address the collective role of the house of Israel (gathering scattered Israel, covenant-keeping, missionary work, temple work) more than detailed, tribe-by-tribe "job descriptions" about the modern responsibilities of the tribes of Israel.

In his book, *65 Questions and Answers about Patriarchal Blessings*, Alonzo Gaskill summarizes and explains each tribe's blessings and warnings prophesied in Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Romans 8:16-19

A Seek Me GUIDEBOOK OLD TESTAMENT Context & Study

JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST

Summary

For anyone who asks Him, Jesus Christ will help them become as much like Him as they are willing to become.

POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF JESUS CHRIST

In response to Heavenly Father's question, "Whom shall I send?", Lucifer proposed a different plan than Father's. In Lucifer's proposal, he would have taken God's power and kept it for himself (Moses 4). In Father's plan, His firstborn, Jesus Christ, would claim God's power. And what would Jesus Christ do with that power? Share it. As part of the covenant promise, He promises to share all that He has, including God's power, with everyone who is in a covenant relationship with Him.

Are we not **aiming to obtain the promise that has been made to all believers**? What is it? *"He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."* (Rev. 21:7) ...For says Paul, *"Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."* (Cor. 3:21, 23) Well, then, if all things are ours, we should be very insensible to our best interests if we did not **seek diligently for that which Heaven promises as a legacy to the faithful**. It is our right, then. Do we not all expect to be armed with almighty power? ...It is said, we are *"heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."* (Rom. 8:17) Does Jesus Christ possess all power in heaven and on earth? He said, when he rose from the dead, *"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."* (Matt. 28:18) Are we heirs of God, and joint heirs with that illustrious character? He has so declared! If we are, **do we not, in common with him, possess the power that is in heaven and on earth!** [p.122b]

Orson Hyde, October 6, 1823, Journal of Discourses 1:121

We do not govern this power according to our will. God is the source of His power, and the use of it aligns with His way. We especially have access to God's power when we are doing His work.

BECOMING JOINT-HEIRS

Being a joint-heir means being Christlike. It takes time for our natures to become refined. Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost can help.

To become a joint heir of the heirship of the Son, one must put away all his false traditions. - Joseph Smith

We are all heirs of our heavenly parents. This means, as we are told in the New Testament, that we are 'heirs ... of eternal life' (Titus 3:7) and that if we come to the Father, we are to 'inherit all things' (Revelation 21:7)—all that He has—a concept our mortal minds can hardly grasp. But at least we can understand that **achieving this ultimate destiny in eternity is possible only if we follow our Savior, Jesus Christ, who taught that 'no man cometh unto the Father, but by me'** (John 14:6).

Dallin H. Oaks, Followers of Christ,
April 2013 General Conference

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; **and greater works than these shall he do**; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments.** (John 14:12-15)

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, **the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.** (1 Cor 2:9)

Jesus wants to share all with everyone who will let Him

HE WANTS US TO HAVE THE BLESSINGS WITH HIM

If Jesus shared covenant blessings like prizes at the finish line of a race, then when we cross the "finish line" of life, we would be given a gift bag, participate in an awards ceremony, stay for a short celebration, and then be sent on our way. However, being given something before leaving is the pattern for "parting gifts," and it is not the way of covenant blessings.

Instead, Jesus wants us to have the blessings with Him, and He wants to enjoy them with us.

...call upon me while I am near—Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. (Doctrine and Covenants 88:62-63)

One example of this is the way Jesus shares His power. As we stay close to Jesus, we have access to His power.

Each person who makes covenants in baptismal fonts and in temples—and keeps them—has increased access to the power of Jesus Christ.

ACCESS TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND GOD'S POWER NOW

Not all covenant blessings are afar off. Many can be enjoyed now. There are many spiritual gifts we can ask for and receive after we are baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. We need to ask for them. We are commanded to seek Jesus and to pray in Jesus' name. As we pray, we seek and we ask. By faith, the power of God is manifest.

The reward for keeping covenants with God is heavenly power... This power eases our way. Those who live the higher laws of Jesus Christ have access to His higher power. Thus, covenant keepers are entitled to a special kind of rest that comes to them through their covenant relationship with God.

Russell M. Nelson, Overcome the World and Find Rest, Oct. 2022

We need strong Christians who can persevere against hardship, who can sustain hope through tragedy, who can lift others by their example and their compassion, and who can consistently overcome temptations. We need strong Christians who can make important things happen by their faith and who can defend the truth of Jesus Christ... **What is the source of such moral and spiritual power, and how do we obtain it? The source is God. Our access to that power is through our covenants with Him."**

Todd D. Christofferson,
The Power of Covenants, April 2009 General Conference

So many wonderful things are ahead. In coming days, we will see the greatest manifestations of the Savior's power that the world has ever seen. Between now and the time He returns "with power and great glory," He will bestow countless privileges, blessings, and miracles upon the faithful.

Russell M. Nelson, Overcome the World and Find Rest, October 2022 General Conference.