

ABRAHAM

“As we follow Abraham’s example, . . . we will find greater happiness and peace and rest, [and] we will find favor with God and with man.”¹ —President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)

The marshland of Ur in Chaldea was my first home. The Chaldeans, including my father, worshipped idols and offered human sacrifices. But I believed in the one true and living God and prepared for the day when I could receive the priesthood, as my forefathers did.²

One day the Chaldeans bound me as a sacrifice on the altar of the god Elkenah. As they were about to kill me, I prayed to God for deliverance and my bonds were loosed immediately. Then the Lord spoke to me: “I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away . . . into a strange land.”³

The Lord began to bless me immensely: I received the priesthood

through Melchizedek,⁴ and the Lord covenanted with me that I would become the father of many nations and that the gospel would bless all humanity through my posterity. He changed my name from Abram to Abraham, meaning “father of a multitude.”⁵

I brought my family to Canaan, the land the Lord had prepared for us.⁶ The Lord promised me that His covenant regarding my posterity would be fulfilled through a son born by my wife Sarah. Sarah and I had been unable to have children. We wondered how we could have children when we were both so old—I was 100 and Sarah was 90.⁷ But as the Lord promised, we did have a son, Isaac.⁸

Some years later, there came one of the hardest trials of my life. Even though I had witnessed the pain of human sacrifice, the Lord asked me to offer my son Isaac as a sacrifice. My heart grieved, but I trusted the Lord. When I was about to slay Isaac, an angel called to me, saying, “Lay not thine hand upon the lad, . . . for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld . . . thine only son.”⁹ The Lord provided a ram to be sacrificed in Isaac’s place, which Isaac and I then offered to the Lord.¹⁰

Because of my obedience, the Lord reaffirmed His covenant: “I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”¹¹ ■

NOTES

1. Spencer W. Kimball, “The Example of Abraham,” *Ensign*, June 1975, 7.
2. See Abraham 1:1–8.
3. See Abraham 1:12, 15–16.
4. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:14.
5. See Genesis 17:1–9; Abraham 2:8–11; Bible Dictionary, “Abraham.”
6. See Abraham 2:4, 18–19.
7. See Genesis 17:15–21.
8. See Genesis 21:1–3.
9. Genesis 22:12.
10. See Genesis 22:1–13.
11. Genesis 22:17–18.

