

“To This End Was I Born”

Lesson
26
Summary

Matthew 26:47–27:66; Mark 14:43–15:39; Luke 22:47–23:56; John 18–19

Scripture Summary:

Jesus is betrayed by Judas, and taken before Caiaphas — Peter denies that he knows Him. Jesus is accused and condemned before Pilate — Barabbas is released—Jesus is mocked, crucified — He places his mother in John’s care — He dies; His side is pierced with a spear — He is buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

First Earthly Birth Instructed to be Born Again: The atonement symbolism of the Messiah’s death and resurrection was foreshadowed since the beginning of time. It begins with Adam; his immersion, an act of being born again. “As an everlasting covenant, baptism began on this earth with Adam (Moses 6:64-67) and has continued ever since whenever the Lord has had a people on earth. (D. & C. 20:23-28; 84:26-28) It was not a new rite introduced by John the Baptist and adopted by Christ and his followers. The Jews were baptizing their proselytes long before John, as is well attested from secular sources.” (Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, Pg.71) “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:4)

Abraham & Isaac – Both Powerful Atonement Symbols: Abraham being saved and subsequently Isaac being saved from premature death are some of the most direct symbols of the Savior’s atonement. Abraham testifies, “And as they . . . might . . . take away my life . . . I lifted up my voice . . . the Lord hearkened . . . Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have . . . have come down to deliver thee . . .” (Abraham 1:15-16) Abraham was brought to the “Crossroads of the East,” promised a posterity like the “sands of the sea,” yet Sarah was barren. Miraculously, even after the “time of women” had passed, Sarah conceived and bore a child. The miracle may have evoked laughter from the neighbors. Truly, the laughter of joy spilled from the mouths of the almost centenarians, Abraham and Sarah, as God’s promised word was fulfilled, and they brought forth new life.

A Lifetime Symbolic Name: That child’s name, Yitzhak (Isaac in English), means laughter, delight and humor in Hebrew. Jewish tradition insists that in his early thirties, Isaac obediently followed his father Abraham who was instructed to take this miracle son and offer him as a human sacrifice. The appointed event was to take place at Mount Moriah, “Moreh-Yah,” (to be taught of Jehovah). The dialogue that followed teaches us the real lesson of two humble and obedient Godly men who are taught the atonement. There are patterns that teach the ultimate sacrifice of the Lord.

The Names of the Lord Repeated Throughout the Saga: Please note the three chiasmi are intertwined yet each one has a name of Lord as the beginning and the end as well as in the center. The imagery teaches that God will provide His son, the Lamb of God, who will take upon himself the sins that we are all caught in, we then can see Jehovah, God’s son, who will take us to His and our Father in Heaven.

“ . . . Abraham . . . said, Here am I , my son. And he (Isaac) said . . . where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb . . . And Abraham . . . took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD . . . said, Abraham . . . and he said, Here am I .

“And the **Angel of the Lord** called him out of Heaven, and said . . . Lay not thine hand upon the lad . . . And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and . . . beheld behind him a **ram caught in a thicket** . . . and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son . . . And the **Angel of the LORD** called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time . . .”

“. . . seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me . . . And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh : . . . In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen . . . because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son . . .” (Genesis 22:7-18)

Abraham’s life was chiastic: first to be offered as a human sacrifice and then to be saved, later to be commanded to offer his own son as a sacrifice and then to have him saved. All this was to teach us that God, also on Mount Moriah, was to offer his Son as a sacrifice to save us all.

“It’s Not About Your Son, It’s About My Son:” Abraham and Isaac apparently knew that Isaac was a symbol of God’s firstborn son. A substitute was found as a ram in the thicket. Ever since, other substitutes were offered as a symbol of Him who would pay for our sins as we repent. From that time on, other substitute animals, always firstborn and unblemished, were sacrificed on Mount Moriah, always on the northern side of the temple altar. (Leviticus 1:11)

Even the Crucifixion Site is a Symbol: Today on the northern end of the Temple Mount stands an abandoned quarry with caves that give it a grotesque skull-like look. Many people consider this the Place of a Skull, Calvary or Golgotha, where the Lamb of God, the firstborn Son of God, was sacrificed when He was crucified. (John 19:17) The remarkable symbolism of time, places, and events seemed to have foreshadowed the Messiah, the Holy One of Israel.

Atonement Instruction: It is apparent that the temple, built on Mount Moriah, was to teach about the Atonement for all people. The Savior will return to the house of the Lord and restore it as a place of worship and teaching. He will bring the Jews and the Moslems, who venerate ancient Abraham, across the bridge connecting ancient symbolism with the atonement. “. . . the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Malachi 3:1) All people will then be able to recognize the reason, the purpose, the ultimate mission . . . “To this end was I born.

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament and Book of Mormon Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available *FREE* at www.HolyLandsRevealed.com. (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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