

## **Day 20 - FRIDAY: November 11th**

Genesis 22 & 23

Genesis 22:1-24 NKJV

Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together. Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for

now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided." Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba. Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, "Indeed Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel." And Bethuel begot Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah.

#### Genesis 23:1-20 NKJV

Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. Then Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying, "I am a foreigner and a visitor among you. Give me

property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight." And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, "Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead." Then Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, the sons of Heth. And he spoke with them, saying, "If it is your wish that I bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and meet with Ephron the son of Zohar for me, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah which he has, which is at the end of his field. Let him give it to me at the full price, as property for a burial place among you." Now Ephron dwelt among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the presence of the sons of Heth, all who entered at the gate of his city, saying, "No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field and the cave that is in it; I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you. Bury your dead!" Then Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land; and he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, "If you will give it, please hear me. I will give you money for the field; take it from me and I will bury my dead there." And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, "My lord, listen to me; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver. What is that between you and me? So bury your dead." And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out the silver for Ephron which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currency of the merchants. So the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field, which were within all the surrounding borders, were deeded to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city. And after

this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. So the field and the cave that is in it were deeded to Abraham by the sons of Heth as property for a burial place.

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

Genesis 22: We come to the sacrifice of Isaac chapter. Imagine waiting 25 years to be blessed by God with a child and then at some point have God require you to sacrifice that child. I had always pictured Isaac as a fairly young child, but Jewish historian Josephus states that Isaac was 25 years old when this occurred.

Notice what the UCG Bible reading states about this chapter:

“The offering of Isaac is one of the best-known stories of the Bible. In fact, it has become synonymous with faith and obedience.

Why would God need to test Abraham? The answer is implied in verse 12: “For now I know that you fear God.” As mentioned in one of our previous readings, Genesis weaves together several recurring themes.

Two of those themes are the sovereignty of God and our submission to Him. Did Abraham *really* have a proper fear of God—respect for who God was, His divine power and awesome purpose? Did he really believe and trust in God from his innermost being? Or was Abraham merely obedient because some instant gratification was in it for him? Would Abraham obey when it appeared greatly to his present disadvantage to do so? Obedience, of and by itself, is not necessarily a sign of love or submission. One can obey out of terror or pursuit of material gain. How would God know? A test was required.

What must Abraham have been thinking? He didn’t delay to obey (he rose *early* the next morning), but as he and Isaac journeyed to Moriah his

mind was not on the weather. Hebrews 11:17–19 tells us what Abraham was thinking: “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure” (KJV). Abraham *accounted* that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead in order to fulfill His promise that Abraham’s primary line of descent would be through Isaac—rather than through any of Abraham’s other children. The Greek word translated “accounting” signifies exactly what it appears to mean—to add up. Abraham was adding up the situation as he proceeded to Moriah. He was considering God’s promise, God’s integrity, God’s character—adding up all the facts and coming to the conclusion that God would have to resurrect Isaac. Abraham’s faith was being built by a sober consideration of *who God was!*

Abraham’s confidence can even be seen in Genesis 22. He tells his servants, “Stay here with the donkey, the lad and I will go yonder and worship, *and WE will come back to you*” (verse 5)—that is, he told them that he *and* Isaac would return. Indeed, Abraham truly believed it. His willingness to put the knife to Isaac’s throat proved both his obedience and his faith, while proving also that he had an intelligent faith and a submission to God’s sovereignty *not* based on a pursuit of selfish advantage.

But Abraham was not the only one being tested. It seems that Isaac, too, was being tested. Would he submit to his father’s apparently crazy intentions? Would he struggle against his father? Isaac’s response was simple submission. There is not a hint of resistance given, not a contrary

word spoken. Isaac foreshadows the unquestioned obedience and willing submission of Christ to God. Jesus never resisted His Father's will. Though His death would be humiliating and painful in the extreme, Jesus was committed to doing his Father's will—"Thy will be done" (Matthew 26:39, 42)" [END]

Genesis 23:

Verse 1 - Sarah was 90 when she gave birth to Isaac meaning that she was allowed to be a mother for 37 years of Isaac's life.

Verse 6 - NKJV states "You are a mighty prince among us". The Literal Standard Translation (LST) & Young's Literal Translation (YLT) both translates it "A prince of God". Others translate it as "a great leader" (ERV), "an important man" (CEV). The Hebrew is "elohiym nasi". Elohiym is most often (2,346 times) translated "God" but can also be "god" (in a general sense - 244 times) and occasionally is translated "judge, great, mighty, etc...". Nasi is most often translated "prince", and less often "captain, chief, ruler". You'll likely remember from our study of Genesis 1, that Elohiym is plural. If we take the most common translations we would get "Gods prince" or "prince of Gods". No matter the exact title, it is very clear that Abraham was highly thought of by these individuals, and his connection to the True Gods (God the Father and the Word who would later become Jesus Christ) was clearly understood.

The UCG Bible reading plan gives much depth into the cultural practice found in this chapter:

"The transactions recorded in this chapter are insightful for their picturesque detail and cultural accuracy.

At one time various scholars declared the Hittites (descendants of Heth, mentioned in Genesis 10:15) to be fiction because archaeologists and

historians could find no trace of them outside the Bible. Thus, in their reasoning, the Bible was also a fiction. But then came revolutionary archaeological finds that conclusively proved the Hittites were not imaginary but instead ruled a large and powerful empire centered in modern-day Turkey but with extensive holdings in upper Mesopotamia, down the eastern Mediterranean coast and even in Egypt for a time. Much of the archaeological data on the Hittites comes from voluminous cuneiform tablets detailing business transactions. Interestingly, those tablets show that Hittite title deeds to land made particular mention of the number of trees on the property, just as recorded in verse 17—a small detail that provides startling confirmation of the accuracy of the Genesis record.

The actions and dialogue recorded between Abraham and the Hittites provide a marvelous picture not only of Abraham's personal comportment but also of the complex rules of approach common to much of Middle Eastern culture. Abraham calls himself a stranger and sojourner when he addresses the council of the sons of Heth. The word translated stranger is *ger*. The *ger* was similar to what we call a resident alien, and it carried the idea of submissive dependency upon the host. That Abraham would so characterize himself before a council who knew him to be a "mighty prince among us" (verse 6) shows not only his humility but also the cultural practice of self-humiliation. This self-humiliation is reinforced by Abraham twice bowing himself before the people.

The dialogue between Abraham and Ephron also preserves the very strong Middle Eastern flavor of the whole transaction. Abraham requested the council of the sons of Heth to "intercede for me" (as the

Hebrew literally says) with Ephron, at once showing deference and submission befitting his status as a *ger*. Ephron, in fact, was already sitting before Abraham (for verse 10 should be translated, “And Ephron *sat* among the sons of Heth”), but to show his deference Abraham does not directly address him. Now the haggling for a price begins.

Although the conversation does not appear to be haggling, it actually is—only it is done in such a way as to cause each party to the negotiation, Abraham and Ephron, to appear to be righteous and generous. Ephron, with great show, implores Abraham to take the land without payment, an offer that he fully expects Abraham to politely refuse. Indeed, according to the culture of the day, Abraham *had* to refuse. It should be noted here, though, that Abraham had only asked for the cave at the end of Ephron’s field. Ephron’s response meant that if Abraham wanted the cave, he was going to have to buy the whole field. In reply, Abraham offers to buy the field, but he does not name a price—for to do so would have transgressed proper etiquette by putting Ephron in the awkward position of appearing to put the bite on a mourning man if the price were not to his liking. Ephron then replies, again with an award-winning display of “magnanimity,” naming as expected a price for the land that was somewhat excessive but characterizing it as an inconsiderable sum. Normally, Abraham’s next move would be to “generously” offer a lower amount, leading Ephron to come down on his price. The haggling would continue until a satisfactory deal was struck. But in this circumstance, Abraham simply pays the first price Ephron names. Perhaps he wanted all to witness that his acquiring of this property was more than fair. No doubt, he wanted the land right away—and that there be no question



about ownership. With the negotiations ended, Abraham acquires the property for a burial place. Remarkably, with all that God promised Abraham, this was the only piece of land the Bible records him ever personally owning during his lifetime.” [END]