

# (Genesis) Genesis 22-24:60

by Joe Focht

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*This sermon explores Abraham's profound test of faith as he prepares to sacrifice Isaac, revealing deep truths about obedience, worship, and God's ultimate provision of Christ as the Lamb.*

**Duration:** 1:08:16

**Scripture:** Genesis 22:7-24, Matthew 6:33, Mark 1:15, Luke 15:4, John 1:29

**Topics:** "Grace Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of Abraham's servant finding a wife for Isaac. The servant is sent to find a wife from Abraham's relatives and prays for a sign from God. When he arrives at the well, he meets Rebecca and asks for water. Rebecca not only gives him water but also offers to water his camels, which is a huge task. The servant is amazed by her kindness and realizes that she is the one chosen by God to be Isaac's wife. He then goes to Rebecca's family and shares the story, and they agree to let her marry Isaac. The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God's guidance and being open to His leading in our lives.

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## Transcript

Genesis chapter 22, we have Abraham in the end of 21 planting a grove in Beersheba, called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God. First time that's mentioned, that's quite a concept for Abraham, a man thousands of years ago, the everlasting God. And Abram sojourned in the Philistines land many days.

Now, these are days when he is watching Isaac grow into a young man. As we come to chapter 23, it tells us that Sarah dies at 127 years old. Now, if Sarah dies at 127, that means Isaac is 37.

He was born when she was 90. And chapter 23 seems to follow on chronologically, a pretty quick succession after this. So, as we come to this chapter, Isaac is somewhere, 25, 30, probably wouldn't surprise me, 33, right in there.

And he is a young man in full bloom. And Abraham has enjoyed him, living in Beersheba there, in the desert, looking at the stars, no doubt, thinking, Lord, you've made the promise, and now it's been realized in my life, looking at the grains of dust, realizing that the promises of God, that his lineage would be like that, and that God would bless the nations of the world somehow through this young man. And as we come to chapter 22 now, we have God testing, it says, Abraham.

The King James says, tempt, says it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto Abraham, and he said, Behold, here I am. 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. Now, the Bible says that God does not tempt any man, neither can he be tempted with evil, but every man is drawn away of his own lust and entice, and then when lust is conceived, it brings forth sin, and when sin has come to fruition, it brings forth death.

So God does not tempt any man in the sense of soliciting us to evil, but God, by his designs, often will put us into a circumstance where we do not know how it's going to roll out. God allows us to enter into a series of circumstances where things will become much clearer in a week, or in a month, or in six months, or in a year. And he knows well the end from the beginning, and of course God has great confidence as we enter into the circumstance.

And we enter into the circumstance and find that we have little confidence sometimes, wondering how it's all going to come out. And it puts us in a position then where we have to trust him, and then that always becomes a test. And the one who's being tested is us.

It's our faith. It's our trust in him. It's not God that is testing us to see what we're made of.

He knows what we're made of. He's already been next week. He's already been a year from now.

And he already knows how we're going to respond. He is testing us out only in the sense that he asks obedience. He asks us sometimes to get out of the boat and walk on the water, like he beckoned Peter, to come to a place where we may forsake reason or logic, or sometimes we're in a situation where the Scripture is telling us to turn the other cheek, or to love someone, or to offer ourselves a living sacrifice, and we're in a situation where we're saying, Lord, that doesn't make a lot of sense, logically or in regards to human reason, and yet God is asking us to move forward in faith.

And I think that we then are tested in those circumstances. And I think when it says that he's testing Abraham here, it is simply that. He's asking Abraham something that seems very cruel to us.

Take your son and offer him as a burnt offering. And Isaac and Abraham were well aware of human sacrifice. The Canaanites that lived around them often sacrificed, particularly their firstborn.

And as they had come from Ur of the Chaldees, Abraham was familiar with human sacrifice. Again, those who excavated Ur of the Chaldees found evidence of a great number of human sacrifices. So this is something that Abraham understood, but his God was vastly different than the gods of the heathen.

And it seems very cruel to us as we hear this. And we'll see it progress. Now, God is the only one that has the right to sacrifice his son.

All other forms of child sacrifice, abortion, all that, they are perversions of this sacrifice that God planned the history of humanity around. The shedding of blood and Satanism and all that. It is all a perversion of the fact that in the midst of time and eternity, there is a lamb as it had been slain.

And because Christ was willing to offer himself from the foundation of the world, God allowed human history to roll out. And human history in itself is centered around God taking a bride for his son out of human history and God being justified in doing that because his own son before the foundation of the world offered himself freely as a lamb that was slain. So God is the one that has the right in all of this as it

were to offer his son.

And it is pagan idolatry for a human being to do that. Now, God is putting Abraham through a parable. He will become a living parable.

He's going to take Isaac to the very mountain that Jesus Christ will be crucified on 2,000 years after this. Mount Moriah, right at the peak, which is Golgotha. He will take him to that very place and there he will deal with Abraham and something will be enacted that Abraham then will pass to his generations.

And it says, even in Moses' day, as he records this chapter, he says, it is even said unto our day, in the mountain of the Lord it shall be seen. In fact, Kyle and Dillard say Moriah means Jehovah is shown or Jehovah displays himself. And certainly that will be the place that God will display himself in the greatest way there at the crucifixion of Christ.

So he's taking Abraham there. Now, there are seven times as we study through that God has appeared to Abraham. In Ur of the Chaldees, we know from Genesis chapter, I mean from Acts 7, verse 2, that he appeared to Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees, the God of glory.

He appeared to him again as he came into Canaan when Abraham built an altar there in the area of Shechem. As he brought him back from Egypt and his backsliding and restored him and he separated Lot from him, Abraham then goes to battle with those kings in Chedoram and so forth in 14. And in the beginning of 15, God appears to him in a vision and speaks to him in regards to his seed again.

At the end of him again as a burning pot passing between the parts. In the beginning of chapter 17, it says the almighty God, the Lord Yahweh, the almighty God, appeared to Abraham. It's so remarkable to read that.

I don't think we understand the import of that. And then again in chapter 18, God comes to him with two angels and appears to him and sits in his tent door. This is the seventh time we have in record, and seven is a number of completions, that God manifests himself to Abraham in a particular way.

And though it is very difficult as Abraham heads into this circumstance, it is my conviction that if you talked to Abraham at the end of his life, he would have said of you, I'd have traded away all of the other experiences with God to have kept that one on Moriah. What I saw there and what I learned there so deeply touched me and changed my life that I'd have traded everything else away to have kept that experience. Yes, when I headed into it, it was a great difficulty.

It greatly troubled me. My heart was broken. I didn't understand what the Lord wanted.

But what he revealed to me through my obedience is worth more than I could put in human words. And I believe that with all of my heart. I'm not good at it, but I believe that's what Abraham would have said.

God beckons him to come to a mountain that he will tell him of. Now, this chapter is an incredible chapter because it's the first time the word love is used in the Bible. It's the first time the word worship is used in the Bible.

It's the first time the word lamb is used in the Bible. It brings so many things together in an incredible way. Take now thine son, thine only son.

God doesn't recognize Ishmael. Thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest. And bring him to the land of Moriah to a mountain, a particular mountain.

Offer him as a burnt offering there. And God says in verse 2 there, I will tell you something about this mountain. I'm the love of a son.

And that's fitting because that's how the world began. The love between the father and the son. Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his donkey and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son.

He claimed the wood for the burnt offering and rose up and went into the place. This is very important. Notice, which God had told him, past tense, of.

In the end of verse 2 it says, get to a mountain that I will tell thee of, future tense. Now, no doubt Abraham had spent a sleepless night. Wouldn't you have? If God had said to you, the son of all your affections were set on this boy.

All of Abraham's life surrounded Isaac in a sense because the promises were all tied up in this young man. Abraham had been in the land for years before he began to realize the promises. He was 100 and Sarah was 90 before she conceived.

There's been a miracle in all of this. And all of Abraham's dreams and all of the dreams he has for the nation of Israel and all that God has told him about them being in Egypt and coming back again. And all that God has told him about all of the nations of the world being blessed will be through this boy somehow and attached to his life.

And now God is saying, take all that you dream about, take all that's important to you, take the deepest, most important love of your entire life, the thing that all your dreams and expectancies are tied to and offer it up as a burnt offering. And no doubt Abraham was up that night. I wouldn't have been able to sleep tossing and turning, praying, seeking the Lord.

And there was some exchange between God and Abraham that night because as we get to the third verse, now Abraham is going to the mountain that God had told him past tense of. So that night God spoke to him, no doubt not giving him the entire scenario because he will act it out to see it. But God speaking to the heart of Abraham and he comes now with Isaac.

He begins his journey and two young men. Then on the third day, and it's a type of the death of Christ, Isaac's been dead in his heart for three days now as he's traveled. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and he saw the place far off.

And this is the top of Moriah. It's not the slope where the temple is built. As you read through the Old Testament, God always condemns the idolatrous worship on the high places.

It was always on the highest point. So as he sees this place of far off, he sees the peak of Moriah. And that will be the place that he will offer his son.

He sees the place, the specific place of far off. And Abraham said to his young men, Abaiji here, it was a donkey, I and the lad, now by the way that word lad is the same Hebrew word when we're reading about Abraham's young men, same word. I and the lad will go yonder and worship, here's the first time worship

is used, and come again unto you.

Now, very remarkable verse for several reasons. First of all, notice, we're going to go worship and come back. Isaac will say, Father, behold, here's the wood, here's the fire, where's the lamb? Isaac understands well that worship is centered around the shedding of blood.

Isaac understands well, Father, we can't approach a holy God, we can't worship without sacrifice, without substitutionary atonement. Father, where is the sacrifice? He doesn't say to his father, Father, where's the band, where's the worship leaders, where's the keyboard player, how are we going to go worship? That has nothing to do with worship in a sense, that worship may take place during a song service, but worship is a lifestyle. The Hebrew word means just to bow down in the dust before God.

It means that is the position of your life. He is your God. You have no other gods before him.

You live a life of worship. And they're going to worship. Isaac understands there's no approaching a holy God without the shedding of blood.

The amazing thing about verse 5 is this, it's a plural verb, and the way it should be read is, he says to his young men, Abraham, I and the lad will go yonder, we will worship and we will come again. It's one of the most remarkable statements in all of the Bible. He's saying to the young men, we, Isaac and I, now he knows he's going to offer them a burnt offering, we will worship and we will come again, expecting to return with Isaac.

It tells us in Hebrews 11 that he knew if it were necessary that God would raise him from the dead, but I want you to understand it meant that God would raise him from the ashes, because a burnt offering was consumed or there was nothing left from the flames. Not just from the dead, but from the ashes. And it's remarkable, somehow in Abraham's heart, he's saying to these young men, we will come again.

And that is astounding to me. And the servants are left behind. You have to take note of that all the way through this.

God is the one that has to provide the lamb, we're going to read that. The servants are left behind. What will be settled will be settled on this mountain, Calvary, Golgotha, Moriah, between the Father and the Son alone.

No servant will touch it. No servant will get close to it. Our service has nothing to do with our salvation.

God loves the servant more than he loves the service that he gets from the servant. And I think sometimes we get this attitude that it's in our serving, we kind of earn, you know, brownie points with God or something, and that if we're really good this week, he's going to love us a little more. The servants are left behind, because what is necessary for us to fellowship with a holy and perfect God is holiness and perfection.

The kind of perfection that you and I need to walk with God and to come to heaven is total perfection and total holiness. It's the kind of holiness and the kind of perfection that God himself displays. It is God's perfection and God's holiness that you and I need to come to heaven.

Without that, we will never enter, because heaven is designed for His perfection, that's why it's heaven, and His holiness. And it is something that you and I have no capacity at all to provide. None.

Again, if you might live in a single home, and the Empire State Building might be built right next to your house, and you may think, well, you know, that building is so much, look at that, that thing is so much higher, that's so much closer to heaven than I am. And when you look at Christians like that, oh, that man is so much more spiritual than I am. Certainly, you know, he's going to get into heaven easier than I'm going to get into heaven.

You know, you have to understand, when we measure height, if we measure the height of your house and then the height of the Empire State Building, and we measure it in relationship to the furthest star in the universe, 20 billion light years away, then the difference between your house and the Empire State Building becomes very negligible. And when it comes to measuring God's perfection and God's holiness, the difference between the most spiritual Christian and the Christian who is struggling is really very negligible. So the servants are left behind where this issue must be settled.

It must be settled between the Father and the Son alone. An eternal price has to be paid. The servants are left behind, and Isaac and Abraham proceed.

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering, verse 6, and he laid it upon Isaac, his son. That is incredible. And I imagine that the heart of God is breaking because he's seeing the cross being laid upon Jesus.

And he took the fire in his hand, and Abraham must have had a strange feeling when he took that knife. And then, look, twice, it'll say this again in verse 8, they went, both of them, together. Imagine that walk.

I can't imagine if it was my oldest son, Mikey, and I walking together, leaving the servants behind. He's bearing the wood that I will burn him on. I'm carrying the knife that I will kill him with.

And the fire in my hand, and we're walking together to a place. Abraham probably walked in front of Isaac so he wouldn't have to look in his face. I don't know what happened, but twice it will tell us they walked, both of them, together.

And I think, what a stroll. What a walk that must have been. We have a little record of the conversation.

Verse 7 says, Isaac spoke to Abraham, his father. Evidently, Abraham had been silent until then, as they're walking, and said, My father. He said, Here am I, my son.

He said, Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? Isaac 30, 33, Abraham 130, 133. The question comes, Father, I understand we're going to worship. I'm lugging this wood on my back.

I see you have the knife and the fire. I must be missing something here, Dad. We don't have a lamb.

Abraham says, My son, God will provide himself a lamb. Now it's interesting. First time the word lamb is used in the Bible.

It's a question. Father, behold the fire and the wood. Where is the lamb? Now the very interesting thing is, you go to the New Testament and you find the first time the word lamb is used, it isn't in Matthew, it's not in Mark, it's not in Luke.

You read all the way through those Gospels and the word lamb is never used. You don't find it until you get to John, I think, chapter 1, verse 29. Here, there's a question in the Bible the first time the word lamb is

used.

Father, where is the lamb? There, in John chapter 1, the question is answered when John the Baptist says, Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. There's such tremendous beauty as we go through this. Father, where is the lamb? And then I'm prejudiced to the King James Version here because the answer comes from Abraham, God will provide himself a lamb.

Not for himself. Your translations say that. I'm sure that's implied.

God will provide a lamb for himself. Isaac, don't worry. But I think there is a double truth here and it's prophetic.

Abraham says in the King James, God will provide himself as the lamb. God will provide himself a lamb for the sacrifice. And certainly he did as he came in the person of Christ.

Paul says, we see God in Christ on the cross reconciling the world to himself. God providing himself a lamb for a burnt offering. So they went both of them together.

And they came to the place, and Abraham's heart must be broken, which God had told him of. And Abraham built an altar. He's 130 years old.

Notice Isaac's not helping. Isaac probably said, Dad, can I help? He said, No. I want to take my time on this altar, son.

Probably walking back down the mountain to get the stones. Thinking, God, come on, you've got to do something here. We're to the place.

He's building this altar. Isaac's standing by. And then he laid the wood in order.

He didn't just throw it on. He's taking his time. He's putting it in order.

And then, most remarkably, he bound Isaac, his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. He must have said to Isaac, it doesn't say that he bashed Isaac on the back of the head with one of the rocks when he wasn't looking and jumped on him and tied him up and threw him on the wood. It says, he must have said to Isaac, Isaac, turn around, put your hands behind your back.

I mean, I just, I look at this and I think, Lord, Jesus. And while he was tying his hands, he must have said, Father, why? And I'm sure the Father in heaven heard his son saying, why hast thou forsaken me? And he must have said, OK, Isaac, come over here and lay down on the wood. Let me tie your feet.

And he laid him on the wood. And Isaac, like Christ, going willingly, no man taking his life, he could have easily overpowered his father. And he must have been saying, Isaac, the God that I love and that I serve has asked us to enact this.

I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know if Isaac said, but Father, will you use the knife on me? Will you set the wood on fire? Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son. So it comes to the point where Abraham has the knife in the air.

No doubt Isaac looking into the eyes of his father, seeing the tears. And I'm wondering if it was my son, if I would turn away my head or close my eyes before I would bring the knife down, or would I look right in his

face as I plunged the knife into his heart? I wonder whose heart is more broken. Is it Abraham's heart as he's about to sacrifice his son, not understanding what God wants? Why is God waiting this long? Or is it Isaac's heart as he looks into the face, white hair, white beard, his ancient father with a knife raised above his head with tears running down his face? Or is it the heart of God that is most broken in this scene as he sees a scene being enacted in front of him where he will hear his own son cry, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Abraham, no doubt, goes to plunge the knife down.

Very interesting, verse 11, the angel of the Lord, Theophany, Jesus himself who will be the Lamb, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven saying, Abraham, Abraham. And Isaac probably said, Dad, listen. Did you hear that? Abraham said, Here I am.

Isaac said, There he is. He said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad. Isaac went, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him, for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son.

And it says that over and over, thine son, thine only son being repeated from heaven. And God says, Now I know, not in the sense that God did not know, but he's saying to Abraham, I've seen you bring this to completion, Abraham. I've seen you in obedience demonstrate your life.

Look, I hate to go down here, but look down in verse 18. It says, In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed. God speaking to Abraham, Because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Those are the last recorded words we have God speaking to Abraham. Because thou hast obeyed my voice. And that is the epitaph, I'm sure, on Abraham's tomb.

It is the thing that characterizes life from Ur of the Chaldees, that he obeyed the voice of God, many times not understanding, and many times making mistakes and going out of the way. We see that. But Abraham never changing God's.

Abraham never running, as it were, from God. Abraham, the thing that characterized his life and his faith, which was where his righteousness came from, was obedience. Now I know that you reverence me, that you fear me, seeing you have not withheld thine only son from me.

And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering instead of his son. Now that word ram there is not the same word from earlier in verse 8 where Abraham says God will provide himself a lamb.

That's a different word than the ram that he offers. So this isn't the one that had been prophesied. This is a ram that was caught in a thicket.

How convenient. And Abraham offers him, but it isn't the lamb that was prophesied back in that verse. There was a ram caught in a thicket.

Abraham took that ram and offered him, and it would be the first of thousands upon thousands upon thousands of animals that would bleed their life out into the ground on that mountain, looking forward to the one who would come to take away the sin of the world. Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah Jireh, the Lord our provider. It's really in the sense the Lord that sees, but it's with action the Lord that will see to it.

And then in that sense it's Jehovah Jireh, the Lord our provider. He called the name of that place, the Lord will provide. As it is said, now Moses putting in his note as he's writing, as it is said to this day in the mount of the Lord, Moses said still future, future tense, it shall be seen.

Moses says we know in our day that this is the place where a particular thing will be manifest and demonstrated of Yahweh God. And Moses doesn't say exactly what it is, but you have to imagine what happened was Abraham came back from this experience, he must have told his servants, he must have told Isaac, he must have told his family. This is amazing, God took me to the place, he allowed me, it seemed so cruel to me, I wasn't sure, he gave me some reassurance, but in that moment when my heart was being torn from my breast as I was about to plunge down the knife, all of a sudden I saw the one that would come.

And Jesus said that to the Pharisees, chapter 8 I believe verse 56, Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and no doubt it was right in that scene that Abraham saw the Savior of the world that would come. And pass that on in oral tradition to those that followed after him. Remember back before God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, he said of Abraham, I know that he will instruct his children after my ways, that he will teach them.

And no doubt Abraham passed it along so that even in Moses' day as he writes, he said even in our day it is still said that in this mountain it shall be seen, the thing that God will do. How incredible. And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven a second time and said, by myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, now notice it's the angel of the Lord, and then it says, saith the Lord, Yahweh, the same person, for because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thine son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the seed of the Lord.

As the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed because thou hast obeyed my voice. Very interesting. So Abraham returned unto his young men and they rose up and went together to Beersheba and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

Now it's very interesting. There's no mention of the young men returning, of Isaac rather, returning. It says that he comes back and the young men come back.

Isaac is not mentioned again until we get to chapter 24. Now there are beautiful types here. In chapter 22 we see the only son offered by the Father on the mountain, a picture of Christ.

In the next chapter we see Sarah die. In the chapter after that, 24, we see Eleazar, and we're told earlier in chapter 14, that's his name, the chief servant of Abraham, which God is my helper, which is a type of the Holy Spirit because Jesus said the paracletus, the one who comes alongside to help. So Eleazar is sent by the Father to a different land, not to Canaan, to get a bride for the only begotten son.

So we have this beautiful picture of God offering up his son on the mountain, then the wife of the Father, Jehovah, as it were, setting aside Israel for a time, and then sending to fetch Rebekah, a wife for his only begotten son. And the next time we see Isaac, and the next time his name is mentioned, is when Eleazar is bringing the bride from Padnarum, and Isaac is sitting by the well of Leheroi. And the beautiful picture, of course, is the son is offered, Jesus Christ.

We don't see him again until the Holy Spirit brings the bride. And that's what we're waiting for tonight, if you don't know that. For the trumpet to sound, and for this corruption to put on incorruption, and this mortal to put on immortality.

And how beautifully the story is told out in these chapters. Abraham returned unto his young men, but he doesn't mention Isaac. They rose up and they went together to Beersheba.

And Abraham dwelt at Beersheba. And it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, now by this time there's some trade going back and forth, some traveler, some trader. The idea is some man who is traveling tells Abraham, behold Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor back in Ur of the Chaldees.

So he receives word that his family is growing back in the land of Ur. Huz, his firstborn, and Buz, his brother. I don't know who would do that to their kids.

Huz and Buz. You know, I don't know whether they're inventing names or running out of names here. I wonder if they're twins.

Huz and Buz. And Chemuel, the father of Aram. And Hoseid, and Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaf, Bethuel.

What a mouthful to call those kids for dinner. No wonder they called two, Huz and Buz, it makes everything easier. And Bethuel begot Rebekah.

Now that's important because that's where we're going in chapter 24. These eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother, and his concubine, whose name was Rumah, she bear also Teba, Geum, Teash, and Meaca. Now, Sarah was a hundred and twenty-seven years old.

These were the years of the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kiriath Arba, the same as Hebron in the land of Canaan. And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

Very interesting. This is the only woman recognized as the mother of faithful women in the Bible. There's no other woman that singled out and said this is an example.

But she tells us she's a mother of believing women in regards to faith. It gives us the age that she dies here, very interestingly, 127, which makes Isaac 37 years old when she dies. And it's the only woman's age in the Bible given like that.

It's significant. Sarah died in Kiriath Arba, in Hebron, in the land of Canaan. And then it says Abraham came to mourn for Sarah.

So evidently he's not there when she dies. So we get the idea it is not a prolonged sickness. She must have died suddenly.

We don't know if it was a heart attack, what happened. Abraham is away doing something. He gets word and he comes then to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

He wasn't there when she died. There's mention of a man's tears in the Bible also. Abraham weeping for Sarah and how they must have loved one another.

Imagine that. Imagine being in love all those years, broken hearted, not having children, moving to another land. You know, you change environment and it kind of glues you together in an interesting way.

The only familiar face around was Sarah's, as it were. And then God blessing in a miraculous way, giving birth at 90 years old, living 37 years after that, her and Abraham. And Abraham is rejuvenated too.

He gets remarried at 165, has more kids. And just how heartbroken. Imagine being married.

How long were they married? 100 years? Imagine having your 80th anniversary, your 90th anniversary. He came and he wept for her. I bet he did.

And what a woman she was to have been with him all those years, living in tents, never finding the city that he looked for, never inheriting a piece of ground. What a woman. Abraham stood up from before his dead and he spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you.

Give me a possession for a burying place with you that I may bury my dead out of my sight. The children of Heth, the Hittites, answer Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord, thou art a mighty prince. Now the Hebrew says thou art a prince of God.

They recognize Abraham as having a special relationship with the living God. I mean, they have seen him defeat Chedorlahomor and the four kings from the north with a huge army with only 300 guys. They have seen his God just smoke Sodom and Gomorrah.

They've seen Abraham become a father at 100 years old. They know that Abimelech's house was plagued because of his trying to take Sarah into his harem. And then Abraham prayed for him and he was healed.

So Abraham has quite a reputation. Now these Hittite men say, You are a prince of God among us. Take the choice of your sepulchers of burying for thy dead.

None of us will withhold from thee his sepulcher, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth. And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me and entreat from me to Ephron, the son of Zoar, that he may give me the cave of Mephila, which he hath, which is in the end of his field.

For as much money as it is worth, he shall give it to me for a possession of a burying place amongst you. And Abraham says, No, no, let me pay you. And you know, this whole thing goes on, this part of the culture.

The most amazing thing is recognize this. This is the only piece of ground. It's one we know for sure, maybe two.

Acts 7.16 gives us another verse. We don't have to worry about that now. What it does tell us is this.

Abraham is forsaken his own land. He is going to bury his wife and his sons and his family in the land of Canaan, which he is still sojourning in, which he has not yet received all of the promises of God. He is looking for a city whose builder and maker is God.

But what it tells us is in tremendous faith, he is putting Sarah to rest in this land. He is not returning to Ur of the Chaldeans. He says, Give me this burying place here in this land.

It's now my land. Ephraim dwelt among the children of Heth, and Ephraim the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of the city, saying, No, my lord, hear me. The field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give you the field and the cave.

I give it to thee in the presence of the sons of my people, give I it to thee, bury thy dead. And Abram bowed down himself before the people of the land, and he spake unto Ephraim in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me, I will give thee money for the field, take it of me, and I will bury my dead there. Ephraim answered Abraham, saying unto him, My lord, hearken unto me.

The land is worth four hundred shekels of silver. Now these are pieces, not coins. What is that between me and you? Bury your dead.

And Ephraim, no doubt, is expecting Abraham to say, No, let me buy it. I'll give you three hundred and fifty pieces. You know, that is what's supposed to happen.

Those of you who have been to Israel with us, I know many of you have been there with us. It is just something that happens in the Arab market. You go into the Arab market, and you're going to buy a shirt.

And they start ridiculously high. This is the shirt, and I want seventy-five bucks. Now, you know you're going to buy that if they want seventy-five.

Sometime, somewhere around thirty-five to forty bucks. Half of what they're asking. But you don't start there, because then you can't move.

So you have to start at twenty bucks. And he says, Twenty dollars? You must be kidding. This is my family lives here.

My father had this store. My grandfather had this store. If I sell it to you, you know, then for twenty dollars, if I sold like that, money would go out of business, and it would be an insult to my father and my grandfather, my great-grandfather, who's dead.

And he would turn over in his grave, and how can you do this to my family? And you go, okay, okay, okay. How much do you want? And then he says, well, eighty-five. He started at a hundred.

And you say, no, I can't give you eighty. I'll give you twenty-five. Twenty-five? I can't believe you.

I'm trying to be gracious. I've let you into my home. I offered you a coffee.

But this is all enjoyed. This is supposed to happen. Now, the remarkable thing is, he says four hundred shekels.

What's that between friends? Go on, bury your wife there. Abraham, it simply says, hearkened, would not bargain or barter over the grave of his wife. He paid the price.

Abram weighed to Ephraim the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth four hundred shekels of silver, current money, with the merchant. The idea is with the weight, the way they weighed it at that point with the merchant. And the field of Ephraim, which was in Mephila, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave, which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure.

The deed was taken by Abraham. Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth before all that went in at the gate of the city. And after this, Abraham buried Sarah, his wife, in the cave of the field, Mephila, before Mamre, the same as Hebron in the land of Canaan.

And the field and the cave that is therein were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons. And by the way, it is there today, the modern city of Hebron has been built around this cave of Mephila. There was a church there originally, and now a mosque is built over this burying place, and evidently the remains of Abraham and Sarah and others in the family are still there.

It's a genuine site. Of course it is in Muslim territory, particularly with the settlement we've seen lately with Hebron, but still a legitimate site. Interesting.

And Abraham was old and well stricken in age. The Lord had blessed Abraham in all things. Now he's going to live like another 40 years, so he's well stricken, but he's still kicking, you know what I mean? And Abraham said unto his eldest servant, now back in 14 we find out his name is Eleazar, the most important servant of his house, the senior, not just the oldest by age, that ruled over all that he had, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell.

Now Abe is making him swear. Now putting the hand under the thigh was pointing at the reproductive organ. It was very significant in this because it was attached to the promise.

And Abraham saying to him, make this oath that is involved with this promise God has given me. I do not want my son to marry one of the unbelieving Canaanite women and pollute this revelation of the true and living God that has come to our family. I want you to go back to my homeland and find a proper wife for my son.

Any good parent feels the same way. Any good Christian parent does not want their child, their son or their daughter to marry an unbelieving partner. And Abraham is just taking that great place of a believing father, trying to protect the faith that he is seeking to pass to the next generation.

Thou shalt go unto my country to my kindred seven hundred miles north by northwest from the area of Beersheba. Thou shalt go into my country to my kindred and take a wife unto my son Isaac. And the servant said unto him, well perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land.

Must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from which you came? And Abraham said unto him, beware that thou bring not my son there again. The Lord, God of heaven, which took me from my father's house and from the land of my kindred, which speak unto me and swear unto me, saying, unto thy seed will I give this land, he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son. So he says to the servant, now I want you to go back to this area, Padinarum, where I have relatives, and I want you to take of my family a proper wife for my son.

This servant, unnamed, the Holy Spirit doesn't bear record of himself, but says he'll take the things of the son and show them, and that's all he talks about is the son in this chapter. He says, Abraham, you're asking me to travel 700 miles and to go to a family that is not going to know me, and to find a suitable, proper, young virgin for your son, to load her up on camels and bring her back to a place where she has never been. Imagine, put yourself in that position, I have a 17-year-old daughter, imagine a guy riding into town on a horse, long-lost relatives sent me to get your daughter, be the wife of my son.

Sure, it wouldn't happen. He says, Abraham, put your hand on my thigh, make this oath. He says, okay, but let me ask you a question before I swear my life away here.

What if I get there and they refuse, then do I have to come back to Isaac and take him there? And Abraham says, no, God called me into this land, this is our inheritance, do not take my son. Beware that you don't do that, it would be a lack of faith. My burying place is here, do not take my son there.

My God will send his angel before you, and he's going to set this whole thing up. And then Abraham is going to say to him, if you go there, and she refused to come, then you are free of the oath. If the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath, only bring not my son there again.

And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham, his master, and swear to him concerning that matter, Abraham. And the servant took ten camels of the camels. Now, by the way, this speaks of Abraham's wealth.

I think today when we think of Arabia, or we think of Arabs, or Bedouin, we think they all ride camels. Camels are not as common as we think, and they were certainly not that common in this day. For Abraham to give up ten camels out of a larger number of camels speaks great things about his wealth.

The servant took ten camels of the camels of his master and departed, for all the goods of his master were in his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia under the city of Nahor. Now, between verses 10 and 11, 700 miles go by.

He made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that the women go out to draw water. Now, gals, you've come a long way, baby. In those days, it was your job to take the stone watering jar and go to the well and draw water and bring it back to the house.

You did not turn the spigot. No ice machines on the refrigerators. No refrigerators have ice machines on.

Your hubby said, Honey, I'm thirsty. You said, Oh, let me run to the well with the stone jar and get you a drink of water. They came in the cool of the evening instead of the heat of the day.

It was the time of the day that the women go out to draw water. And he said, Oh, Lord God of my master. Now, by the way, as we go on, we're going to find out Eliezer is a believer from living with Abraham.

He will call him his God also. He says, Oh, Lord God of my master. Now, imagine this.

Here's Eliezer. He arrives in this town. We have no evidence that he's been there before.

We don't know. He's a stranger. He's got all these camels.

He has some wealth. He arrives. You know, God says to you, get on a camel, ride to Chicago and find my relatives without any more clues, you know, and bring back a wife for my son.

So he gets there and he's looking around thinking, Where do I go from here? And of course, wisdom is up. So he says, Oh, Lord God of my master. Abraham, I pray they send me good speed this day and show kindness unto my master.

Now, we're going to find out in verse forty five, he's saying this in his heart. He's not saying it out loud. You know, when we think of praying, sometimes we are trapped into, you know, you have to fold your hands and you have to close your eyes and you have to get on your knees.

This guy in his heart, he's sitting there looking around thinking, OK, God, you love Abraham. He's my master. He sent me here.

Now I'm going to need your help in all of this. You know, the reason we do this is because I think we learn as little kids. If you have kids and you watch them around the table and you have to say to them, close your eyes and fold your hands, because if they fold their hands, they're already eating and playing with their food.

And even when you tell them, close your eyes, if you look, you see them going like this, you know, they're looking to see if you're watching them or if any of their brothers or sisters are getting to look and they're not. But certainly it's a good way to pray. I think it's a great way to pray, by the way, to get somewhere on your knees and fold your hands.

Paul says, I bow my knees before God the Father for the sake of the saints, for the sake of the church. It's a good thing to do. Jesus, it seems, his favorite position, whether he was kneeling or sitting, was with his eyes open, looking towards heaven.

This man is praying in his heart. He says, show kindness to my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by this well of water.

And the daughters of the men of this city are coming out to draw water. And he's thinking, trying to find a wife for Isaac is like trying to find a needle in a haystack, Lord. So 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 then she will say to me, drink, and I will also give thy camels to drink. Let that same be she that has been appointed for thy servant Isaac, and thereby I will know that you've shown kindness to your servant. Now this is just in his heart.

He's thinking this, okay God, I need some help here. How about if we do this? Let the first girl I talk to who comes along, and I'll say to her, how about giving me some water, and she'll say sure, and then she'll say to me, by the way, let me water your camels too. Now, he's saying this in his heart.

I don't know if he really expects it to happen. You know, we do those kinds of things, and then when it happens, we look up and say, Lord, is this you? Now you have to understand, he's got ten camels. An adult camel will drink twenty to fifty gallons of water.

So, for a young woman to say, who's going to the stream or the spring with stone jars, you don't have any idea how much a gallon of water weighs. And for this young woman to say, sure, why don't you drink, and let me water your camels too. I don't mind getting two to seven hundred gallons of water for your camels.

Either she is mentally insane, or God is answering the prayer. You know, we just read through. We have to understand, he's really putting a fleece out there.

This is a pretty amazing thing he's asking God here. So, you have to understand, it's pretty remarkable. Then I'll know that we're hooked up here, he says to God.

And she went down to the well and she filled her pitcher and came up. And the servant ran to meet her and said, let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. She said, drink my Lord, and she hastened, she ran, and let down her pitcher upon her hand and gave him to drink.

And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also until they have finished drinking. Now, this has got to blow, this guy is mine. And then she hastened, now she's running, drawing this water, two hundred gallons, back again, you know, this is amazing.

She hastened and emptied her pitcher into the trough. She's running back and forth with a pitcher of water from the well, filling up a trough, ten camels who can drink twenty to fifty gallons apiece are drinking. And she ran again unto the well to draw and drew for all his camels.

Now, by the time this is over, she weighs about thirty-five pounds less than when she started. And that's why it says in verse twenty-one, the man wondering at her, he's scratching his head, he's wondering, he held his peace. He's wondering whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.

Isn't this just like us? Now he's got a woman running back and forth with pitchers of water, giving it to the camels, and he's thinking, gee, could this be you, Lord? He should have said, you know, let a Toyota Land Cruiser fall out of the sky, you know, in front of me and hit the pitcher of water and flip it up in the air and let it come down on a stick on a camel's head. Maybe that will be you, Lord. And it came to pass, as the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden earring, about a half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold, and said, Whose daughter are you? Tell me, I pray thee.

Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, which she bear unto Nahor. This is Abraham's brother's granddaughter. And she said moreover unto him, We have both straw and poventer enough, and room to lodge in.

And the man bowed his head and worshipped the Lord. He didn't even move. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and of his truth.

I, being in the way, the Lord hath led me to the house of my master's brethren. And the damsel, now hears him pray aloud, she ran, and told these words to her mother's house. All of these things now, she comes running in and speaks to this incredible incident that's happened to her also.

It's interesting, it says, I, being in the way. And I think that's very important. Sometimes we ask the Lord for something, but we don't move.

There are times that God will bless us while we're in the way. I, being in the way, the Lord led me. Sometimes it's easier to steer a moving cart than one that's stuck in the mud.

And sometimes people say I'm willing to follow the Lord, but they're not willing to take the first step. And it's just easier to aim somebody while they're moving than it is to get them moving if they're stuck. And it's very interesting, this man's headed out in obedience.

Abraham spoke to him, he got on his way, he came to the place, and he's asking God what to do. And he says it, it was in his motion, it was as I was in the way that God revealed to me his plan, that God showed his mercy. She hears what he's saying and runs and tells her mother of all things that happened.

And Rebekah had a brother and his name was Laban, we'll get to know him. And Laban ran out unto the man under the well and it came to pass when he saw, now this is typical of Laban by the way, when he saw the earring and the bracelets, when Laban saw the gold upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah, his sister saying, Thus spake the man unto me, that he came unto the man, and behold, he stood by the camels at the well. Then Laban says, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord.

You got more gold? Wherefore standest thou without? For I have prepared the house and the room for the camels. And the man came into the house, and he ungirded his camels, and he gave straw and powder for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and notice, and the men's feet that were with him. So Abraham had sent other servants, and there was set food before him to eat, but he said, I will not eat until I have told my errand.

He said, Speak on. He said, Give me the message. You know, he says, I'm going to give my testimony.

And he said, I am Abraham's servant, and the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he has become great, and he has given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and donkeys. 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. So he is there telling Laban about the promised son, about the fact that he is heir of everything, offered, as it were, in chapter 22.

Become the heir of all things. You know, it's like the Holy Spirit, not speaking of himself, but telling to us, to the bride, all things concerning the Father that has sent him to us. And he's giving this testimony.

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, but thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son. And I said to my master, Well, perhaps the woman will not follow me. He said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way, and thou shalt take a wife for my son, from my kindred, and of my father's house.

By the way, that is the story of the Bible. God taking a wife out of human history for his son, taking a bride, and then shutting down human history. That is the story of the Bible.

Then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, when thou comest unto my kindred, and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear of my oath. And I came this day to the well. He's going to reiterate the story.

And I said, Lord God, master of my Abraham, if you're going to prosper my way, behold, I stand by the well of water. And it shall come to pass that when the virgin come forth to draw water, and I say unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little bit of water and a pitcher to drink. And then she says to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels.

And Laban probably looked at her and said, You said that? Let the same be the woman whom the Lord hath appointed out for my master's son. And before I had finished, here it is, speaking in my heart, was not out loud. Behold, Rebecca came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder.

And she went down into the well. She drew water. I said unto her, Can I have something to drink? 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 to drink also. And I asked her, Whose daughter are you? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, nay, her son, whom Milcah bear unto him.

And I put the earring upon her face and the bracelets upon her hands. It was either one of the necklaces worn around the forehead or a nose ring, which was common. And I bowed down my head and worshipped the Lord and blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

And now, if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. If not, then tell me that, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left. And Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the Lord.

We cannot speak unto thee bad or good. You know, we don't have anything to say. It's obvious that God is involved in this.

Behold, Rebekah is before thee. Take her. I don't know if she's going, What? Yep, got more gold.

Take her. Go and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord has spoken. And it came to pass that when Abram's servant heard their words, that he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth, and the servant brought forth jewels and silver and jewels of gold and raiment, and he gave them to Rebekah, and he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things.

And then he ate, finally when he knew that his, and of course this is all typical, you know, the Holy Spirit bringing forth the servant for the bride, the garments and the treasures of Christ, all of this, and then finally the marriage supper, you know, then they ate. There's beautiful pictures all through this. They did eat, they drank, the men were with them, they tarried all night, they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master.

We'll read down, then we'll back up next week. Her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at least ten, you know, we need to kind of pack some things up and give her some instructions, have a going away party, let her friends from high school know. And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered, you know, I want to be obedient, it seems that God is in this.

Send me away, that I may go to my master. Let's stay in the flow, he said unto them. Well, they said, Well, let us call Rebecca, and we'll inquire at her mouth, which is interesting, normally she wouldn't have been taken into the consultation.

And they called Rebecca and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebecca, their sister, and her nurse, Abram's servant, and his men. And they blessed Rebecca and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands and of millions.

Is that a blessing to say to somebody? I'm not sure. And let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them. So we'll come now to the story of Rebecca coming.

Very interesting, the way weddings were arranged in those days, huh? You know, what if she got back to Canaan, and, you know, Isaac had one eye, no teeth, bald, you know. You know, in those days, weddings were arranged, the parents gave away the children, arranged the marriage, the kids didn't have much to say about it, and then after you get married, then you learn to love one another. In America, it's different.

In America, you think you love one another before you get married, and then you learn to love one another after you get married. The same process. You still have to learn to love one another after the wedding, because God asks so much more of us after the wedding day, as we are conformed unto his image and to his likeness, and we learn how to give our lives for one another.

Interesting story. Next week, we'll kind of pick up some of the facts that we followed along, and we'll see Isaac and Rebecca laying eyes on each other for the first time, meeting one another. What an incredible story.

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