

GENESIS 23-24

REVIEW

- **CHAPTERS 22**

- Testing of Abraham – God tells him sacrifice his ONLY son whom he loves...
- But when he arrived at Mt. Moriah – ready to give up his only son...
- An Angel of the Lord appeared and stopped him – it was only a test...
- Abraham had shown there was nothing more important to him than the Lord!

FINDING THE ONE...

- **1ST - THE CAVE OF MECHPELAH... VS. 1-20**

- 1st - Sarah lived to be 127 years old (*37 years after the birth of Isaac*) ... vs. 1
 - Sarah is the only woman in the Bible whose age – death - and burial are recorded...
 - One of the most extraordinary women in the Bible – one of only two in **Hebrews 11!**
 - Peter goes on to all her THE example for Godly wives to follow!
 - **I Peter 3:6** – “Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are...”
 - The assumption is this is referring to a particular instance (*aorist*)...
 - When Abraham doubted God – and asked Sarah to lie - **Genesis 12:13**
 - Even though Abraham was being a knucklehead – Sarah SUBMITTED to him...
 - Not trusting in old Abe – or his futile efforts – but hoping in God to work in spite of him!
 - Sarah called him lord (*present*)...
 - The suggestion here is that Sarah had an impact on Abraham – her HOLY conduct...
 - Her meek and quiet spirit - encouraged Abraham to put his faith back in God...
 - So she was with joy able to call him lord – a man who she could trust to lead her to Jesus!
 - Her example was used by God to make Abraham the man she longed for him to be!
 - Whose daughters you are...
 - As long as you do GOOD – what GOOD – submitting to the Lord / your husband...
 - AND are not afraid with any terror – falling away / departing because of fear!
 - Ladies you become daughters of Sarah – when you HOLD ONTO your hope in God...
 - That as you submit to your husbands in meekness and quietness – they will turn...
 - Like Abraham your influence will help make them the Godly men you always wanted!
- 2nd – Sarah died in Hebron... vs. 2
 - Known then as Kirjath Arba – the City of Four – later known for its giants...
 - Arba was the father of Anak – the giants of Canaan – **Joshua 21:11**
 - Hebron – also called the Terabinth trees of Mamre – **Genesis 13:18**
 - Abraham came (*he was not with her*) to mourn and weep for her!
 - There are a couple of thoughts as to why this might have occurred...
 - First – if we assume some years had passed between **Genesis 22** and **Genesis 23**...
 - Abraham was wealthy and may have had multiple flocks – Hebron and Beersheba...
 - So while Sarah was living back in Mamre / Hebron...
 - Abraham just happened to be checking on the flocks in Beersheba when Sarah passed!
 - Second - Jewish tradition suggests it was the *sacrifice* of Isaac that caused her death...
 - As we do not know how old Isaac was when **Genesis 22** occurred - could have been 37...
 - When Abraham took Isaac – it was more than Sarah could bear – she left Beersheba...
 - Returned to Hebron / Mamre – perhaps to plead with the Lord for the life of Isaac...
 - But passed away before Abraham and Isaac returned safely!

- o 3rd - A burial place for Sarah... vs. 3-16
 - Abraham was a FOREIGNER (*stranger*) and VISITOR (*sojourner*) in the LAND...
 - That meant he had no land of his own – no place to bury his wife...
 - He asked (*cohortative*) the Canaanite sons of Heth (*terror*) / Hittites - for a burial place...
 - They seem to offer to give Abraham a place...
 - Calling him – Lord [אֲדֹנָי] – Prince [*high*] – Mighty – [אַלֹהִים] – a LOT of high praise!
 - Bury your dead (*imperative*) – no of us will withhold from you his burial place...
 - In other words chose any lot of land you want – it is yours!
 - Abraham (*bowing*) offers to buy the cave of Mechpelah...
 - If it was really their desire to let him bury Sarah – out of his sight...
 - Hear me and meet (*both imperative*) with from Ephron son of Zohar...
 - Let him give (*jussive*) the cave of Mechpelah – Abraham would pay full price for it!
 - In a legally binding agreement – in the presence of all who entered the gate...
 - Ephron appears to offer to give the land to Abraham...
 - No my lord – hear me (*imperative*) - I give you field / cave to bury (*imperative*) your dead...
 - But Abraham countered hear me (*imperative*) – take my money (*imperative*) ...
 - Ephron again appears to offer to give the land – but it was worth 400 shekels...
 - Abraham LISTENED – and paid Ephron the 400 shekel price he asked for!
 - He paid him in the currency of the merchants – we would say local currency!
 - Why go through all this pageantry...
 - Even in mourning – Abraham wanted to be a good witness...
 - He respected the culture – was willing to haggle – for the grave of his wife!
 - **There is never a time when we cannot be a light for Jesus...**
 - **In fact in the hardest times – we have the opportunity to shine the most!**
- o 4th – Abraham buried Sarah... vs. 17-20
 - He put in in the cave of Mechpelah – by Mamre – in Hebron...
 - The cave of Mechpelah is still in Israel today – Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron...
 - It is the burial place of Abraham and Sarah / Isaac and Rebekah / Jacob and Lea!
 - The field was deeded (possession) to Abraham...
 - God had promised to give Abraham the whole land of Canaan – **Genesis 13:14-15**
 - But the field and cave of Mechpelah was all he would ever own...
 - **Hebrews 11:9-10** – “Even when [Abraham] reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in a tent... Abraham did this because he was confidently looking forward to... a city designed and built by God.”
 - Abraham was not looking for what he could get from this life...
 - If he had – he could have been very frustrated and disappointed in the Lord...
 - Yet he was looking to an eternal reward – to an eternal city in heaven!
 - **Where are we looking for God to bless us – are we looking for blessing here...**
 - **God does not promise us great rewards here on earth – but in heaven!**
 - **Matthew 6:19-20** - “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.”
- 2ND - SENDING OUT THE SERVANT... vs. 1-9
 - o 1st - Abraham was old – he had a LOT of years – stressing the fact he was REALLY old... vs. 1-4
 - We know that Isaac was 40 years old when he finally married – **Genesis 25:20**
 - Assuming that chapter 24 takes place in about a year...
 - That makes Abraham 140 years old at this point...
 - And the Lord had blessed him in ALL things – but Isaac was still single!
 - Abraham called the oldest servant in his house – the servant who ruled over all he had...

- According to **Genesis 15:2** – the name of the servant was Eliezer – God is my helper...
- Put your hand under my thigh (*repeated by Jacob in Genesis 47:9*)
- Cultural - Showed the severity of the vow – a way of expressing sincerity...
- Swear by the God of Heaven and Earth - do not take a Canaanite wife – but one of his family!
- Isaac was not to go with Him – Eliezer was to go and find the wife for him!

▪ A picture of the church...

- **John 16:7** – “Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.”
- The helper (*Eliezer*) was sent out by the Father to find a bride for the Son...
- Much the same as our Heavenly Father – sent out the Holy Spirit (*helper*) ...
- The Holy Spirit was sent to find a bride for Jesus Christ – the Son!
- **Revelation 21:9** - “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

o 2nd – What if the Bride will not come... vs. 5-9

- Eleazar asked – what if the Bride is not willing to come back with me...
 - Should he bring Isaac with him – back to the land Abraham came out of...
 - Beware (*niphal / imperative*) do NOT take Isaac back...
 - The Lord God of Heaven took me out - gave me THIS LAND – to me and my DECENDANTS...
 - DECENDANT - THE SEED – Jesus – would come from THE LAND of Israel!
 - Therefore Abraham was confident the Lord would send His angel before Eleazar...
 - And provide a wife from his family / country – for Isaac!
- But if no one would come – Eleazar was freed from his oath!
 - **Matthew 22:9** – “Go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding...”
 - In the parable of the wedding feast – the servant was told to go into the highways / byways!
 - The Holy Spirit - is sent out invite EVERYONE to come to the wedding!
 - Because everyone – absolutely anyone – can attend the marriage supper of the Lamb...
 - The catch is we do not get to meet the groom until the wedding day...
 - He will NOT come to meet us here – we have to be willing to go meet Jesus there!
 - It is our choice – God will not force anyone to accept the invitation – we have to choose!
 - **Romans 10:13** – “Whomever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

● 3rd - LOOKING FOR A BRIDE... vs. 10-28

o 1st – Praying for the ONE... vs. 10-14

- Eleazar took 10 camels – and went to MESOPOTAMIA...
 - MESOPOTAMIA – *Aram Naharayim* – the place of the two rivers (*Tigris and Euphrates*) ...
 - To the city of Nahor – the brother of Abraham – to the country and family of Abraham!
 - When he arrived it was evening time - Eleazar asked for a sign...
 - Lord God [יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי] of my master Abraham – give me success this day...
 - Whomever offers water the camels – let her be the appointed (*hiphil / perfect*) one!
- There is a common theology in the church – known as THE ONE...
 - The idea is that for each person God has a chosen ONE that they should marry...
 - As though from before the foundations of the earth – the choice was already made...
 - Now – it is true God KNOWS who we will marry – He knows everything – **Hebrews 4:13**
 - But interestingly the Bible says NOTHING about WHO we should marry!
 - We can ready from cover to cover and there is not ONE passage on WHO we are to marry!
- The idea THE ONE is actually very dangerous...
 - What can happen is we marry someone because we believe they are THE ONE...
 - But inevitable challenges happen in the marriage – **I Corinthians 7:28**
 - We can become disillusioned into thinking maybe we married the WRONG ONE...
 - Which opens up the door to look for ANOTHER ONE – who might actually be THE ONE!

- It is not about WHO we marry – it is about WHO is at the center of our marriage...
 - All the ideas the world fills us with about compatible personalities...
 - Or the thought we need to be physically attracted to a person - outward beauty NOT last!
 - **Not that there is not SOME wisdom there – but it pales in comparison to THE ONE thing...**
 - **The ONLY thing that makes a marriage work – Jesus at the center!**
- o 2nd – Answered prayer... vs. 15-16
 - It happened (*sequential / imperfect*) before he was done praying (*piel – intensive*) ...
 - A beautiful young woman named Rebekah walked up to draw water...
 - She was the daughter of Bethuel – granddaughter of Nahor – the brother of Abraham (*family*)!
 - She was the answer to his prayer – that came as a direct result (*sequential*) of him praying!
 - **Lord I would really like to get married – before we say AMEN – there is our spouse!**
 - **I do wish all prayers were answered this quickly – before we even said AMEN...**
 - **But more often than not – our prayers seem to go unanswered...**
 - **So we often give up praying for something after a week - or a month - or a year...**
 - **But God does not call us just to pray - God calls us to be a people of prayer!**
 - **James 5:16 - “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”**
- o 3rd – Not looking... vs. 17-20
 - Eleazar ran to Rebekah – please give me a little water (*hiphil / imperative*) ...
 - She quickly lowered her pitcher and gave him water to drink (*imperative*)...
 - But she was not only willing to help a stranger – also water his camels till they were full!
 - A camel can drink up to 200 liters at once – Eliezer had 10 camels...
 - That means Rebekah drew up as much as 2000 liters of water from the well!
 - Rebekah was not looking for a husband...
 - She was doing her daily chores – being faithful to serve her FATHER!
 - Why did Rebekah become THE ONE – because she was faithful to her FATHER!
 - **There is often a temptation to get caught up in the things we need (*or want*) ...**
 - **The thought is if we are not seeking after them – we will miss them...**
 - **If I am not out looking for a husband – how will I ever find one...**
 - **Yet we will never miss out on the best for our lives – putting Jesus first!**
 - **In contrast if we focus on the things we think we need (*or want*) ...**
 - **We are likely to miss out on Jesus – and the best things He wants to do for us!**
- o 4th – Worshiping the Lord... vs. 21-28
 - Eleazar – wondering at Rebekah – said nothing...
 - When she was done - he took out a gold nose ring / and two bracelets...
 - The weight of them was 10.5 shekels – about 5.5 ounces – about P500k!
 - Not a bad reward for a couple of hours of pulling water out of the well!
 - When the servant asked who she was – daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor...
 - And there was plenty of room at their house for Eleazar to stay...
 - Eleazar bowed his head and worshiped – I being on the way – the Lord led me!
 - There was nothing special the Servant did – he just stepped out in faith!
 - **II Corinthians 5:7 – “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”**
 - **We often wonder what God wants to do with our life...**
 - **Trying to figure out what the next step is – where are supposed to be / go...**
 - **God does not call us to SIT by faith – we are called to WALK by faith!**
 - **Step out and get moving – as we are walking – the Lord will lead us!**
- 4TH - RETELLING THE STORY... vs. 29-53
 - o 1st - Rebekah had a brother named Laban (*white*) ... vs. 29-31
 - Rebekah served Eliezer out of the kindness of her heart...

- So it came to pass (*sequential*) - Laban saw all the expensive jewelry...
- THEN he said - Come in (*imperative*) O blessed of the Lord!
- For I HAVE (*piel – intensive*) prepared the house – and a room for the camels!
- Laban wanted to bless Eleazar - hoping to get something from him...
 - **Luke 6:34** – “If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back.”
 - We should not seek to bless others because of what we will receive...
 - If we give to those who will give back – godless sinners do the same...
 - If we are kind to those who are kind back – godless sinners do the same...
 - The heart of love and faith is to bless others in spite of how they respond....
 - Whether they are rich or poor – whether they are mean or nice!
 - **James 2:1** – “My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim that you have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people more than others?”
- o 2nd – Giving the testimony... vs. 21-51
 - Before the servant would settle in – he insisted on telling them why he was there...
 - He rehearsed the story – from beginning to end!
 - Then asked them to be straightforward with him – if you will deal KINDLY and TRULY!
 - He had a VERY impressive testimony of how God had led him to Rebekah...
 - But if they did not want to believe it – he would return to Abraham without a bride!
 - Bethuel and Laban could not speak bad or good...
 - They might think it was a great idea or a bad one – but it did not matter...
 - Because it was obviously a work of God - both agreed to give Rebekah as a wife for Isaac!
 - When God does a work – others may not like it – but they cannot argue with it...
 - The best answer we can give others is our testimony of what Jesus has done in us...
 - People can argue with our words – but they cannot argue with Jesus in our lives!
 - **II Corinthians 3:3** – “Clearly, you are a letter from Christ prepared by us. It is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on stone, but on human hearts.”
- o 3rd – Eleazar gave gifts to Rebekah... vs. 52-53
 - Upon hearing that Rebekah would be the wife for Isaac – Eleazar worshiped the Lord...
 - He then gave gifts of silver / gold / AND clothing to Rebekah!
 - He also gave precious things to Laban (*brother*) and Milcah (*mother*)
 - When we accept the offer of the Holy Spirit - salvation in Jesus Christ...
 - He lavishes us with many gifts - **I Corinthians 12:4-7 / Romans 12:4-8**
 - But He also gives us new clothes – the white ROBES of righteousness!
 - **Revelation 3:5** – “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments...”
- 5TH - THE MARRIAGE... vs. 54-67
 - o 1st - The next morning Eleazar wanted to take Rebekah back to Isaac... vs. 54-58
 - Her mother and brother protested – let her stay with us at least 10 days...
 - But when given the choice – she was willing to leave immediately!
 - When we choose to follow Jesus – often it is our family wants to hold us back...
 - It is our choice whether we give in to their pressure – or choose to follow Christ!
 - The Holy Spirit is always right there beside us – helping us to stand for Jesus!
 - **Matthew 10:37** - "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."
 - o 2nd - A four month trip – in one verse... vs. 59-61
 - They sent away Rebekah – with her nurse – Eleazar and the men who came with him...
 - And gave her a parting blessing – may you become the more of ten thousands...

- May your descendants possess the gates (*victory*) of those who hate them...
- Interesting blessing – it was prophetic – because from her would come the nation of Israel!
- Distance from the home of Rebekah to Isaac – over 1000 km...
 - To get back to the land of Canaan would have been at least a 4 month trip...
 - Yet it is covered in only one verse in the Bible – there is no mention of the journey...
 - There were hardships and doubts – but they all melted away when Rebekah arrived!
 - **The point from when we accept Jesus – till we get to see Him face to face...**
 - **Takes a lifetime – but in light of eternity with Him – it is only a single verse!**
- o 3rd – Isaac was meditating in the field... vs. 62-67
 - Isaac came up from Beer Lahai Roi – where the angel met Hagar the first time – **Genesis 16:14**
 - Isaac went out to MEDITATE in the evening – only here OT...
 - This is the first time we see Isaac – since he was offered on Mount Moriah!
 - He lifted up his eyes – and saw the camels far off in the distance...
 - Rebekah lifted up her eyes – and saw Isaac – and got off her camel...
 - And the two met – and Isaac loved Rebekah - and were married!
 - **I love that Rebekah – LOOKED UP – and saw her groom coming to get her...**
 - **Because we should also live life LOOKING UP – for Jesus to come and get us...**
 - **Luke 21:28** – “**Look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near...**”
 - This is one of only TWO recorded engagement in the Bible (*also Ruth*) ...
 - The example of how to find the perfect spouse...
 - Rebekah was busy about her Fathers business when the Helper called her!
 - Isaac was not out looking for his wife - taking time to seek and pray to the Lord!
 - As they were both focused on Jesus – God brought together a great marriage!
 - **If you want to find the perfect ONE – be busy about your Fathers business!**
 - **Taking the time to seek and pray to Jesus...**
 - **An in His time – you will look up – and see THE ONE!**