

**Genesis 22:20-23:20**  
**Life and God's Plan Continue to Progressively Unfold**  
**February 17, 2021**

Genesis is a book about beginnings and a book that details origins.

The steps that God undertook in establishing a relationship with Abraham included:

- Calling him out of his country (Gen. 12:1-2)
- Promising the land of Canaan for Abraham's descendants (Gen. 13:15-17)
- Establishing a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15:17-20)

The last time we studied Genesis we were literally and figuratively on a mountain top. In Gen. 22:1-19 we studied God's testing of Abraham by His telling Abraham to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, on Mount Moriah.

**I. Life and God's Plan Continue to Progressively Unfold in Ur (22:20-24)**

"Now after these things" indicates that the news that Abraham receives came to him after God's testing of him on Mount Moriah.

*In verses 20-24, what is significant about the news that Abraham received about his brother's family? What could have been some of Abraham's responses to the news about Nahor's family?*

**II. Life and God's Plan Continue to Progressively Unfold in Canaan (23:1-20)**

**a. Abraham's Grief over the Death of Sarah (1-2)**

Since the fall of mankind in Gen. 3 death has been a part of man's experience. The curse of sin is death and death's continuing reign is shown here as we read of Sarah's death.

In detailing Sarah's death, we see the special place in Biblical history afforded to Sarah. (Only instance in the Bible where a woman's age is indicated at her death.)

What a full life it had been for Sarah. She had been married to Abraham over 60 years, followed him out of the land of Ur, and throughout their wanderings was instructed by Abraham to lie in order to protect him and was thus placed into danger. 1 Pet. 1:3-6.

Sarah's testimony is the same as every other believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Sarah was a sinner saved by grace and counted among the citizens of the kingdom of God for as Hebrews 11:11 tells us:

<sup>11</sup>By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised.

## **b. Abraham's Response to the Death of Sarah (3-18)**

### **i. The Request for a Burial Place for Sarah (3-4)**

Abraham was not paralyzed by his grief, he wanted to rightly honor Sarah with a proper burial. So once he had finished mourning for Sarah Abraham rose up and went to the Hittites.

*Note Abraham's words in verse 4, what truths and conviction are displayed in this verse?*

### **ii. The Process for Purchasing a Burial Place for Sarah (5-18)**

*What characteristics of Abraham are seen in his dealings with the Hittites and Ephron in verses 5-16 and how are these characteristics beneficial for us even now?*

## **c. The Establishment of a Burial Place (19-20)**

Throughout the passage the following phrases have been used:

- "in the land of Canaan" (2, 19)
- "bury my (your) dead" (4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15)
- "as a possession" or "as a property" (9, 18, 20)

These phrases serve as reminders that Sarah's death was the occasion for the purchase of the field and cave which was part of the continuing, progressive unfolding of God's plan to fulfill his promise of the land to Abraham's descendants. Gen. 49:29-32.

Throughout tonight's passage we've seen contrasts:

- The smallness of Abraham's offspring in comparison to his unbelieving brother's clan.
- The foreigner Abraham standing before the far greater number of Hittites, occupants of the land of Canaan, in order to purchase a burial place for Sarah.
- The smallness of the field and cave belonging to those who were promised the land in comparison to the land that was occupied by the people groups who God would dispossess from the land.

### **Application**

- We should not be discouraged by the seeming smallness of God's kingdom. Mk 4:30-32.
  - We should never discount the impact that we as individuals or we as a church, who are so seemingly small, can have on eternity.
  - We should not discount the work that God is doing in our lives in the mundane events of life since all that He does is conforming us to the image of Christ.
- We should consider how we conduct ourselves in our business dealings, both as individuals and as a church. Do we seek to glorify God in our business dealings?
- We should have the attitude of Abraham. Heb. 11:8-10, Matt. 6:19-21.