

Genesis 22: 20 Some time later Abraham was told, “Milkah is also a mother; she has borne sons to your brother Nahor: **21** Uz the firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel (the father of Aram), **22** Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph and Bethuel.” **23** Bethuel became the father of Rebekah. Milkah bore these eight sons to Abraham’s brother Nahor. **24** His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also had sons: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash and Maakah.

Chapter 22 closes out with the sons of Nahor. When Abraham left the land of Ur, he left his family. One of his family members was his brother Nahor. Abraham and Sarah have raised Isaac the promised son. Isaac is no longer a young boy, he is becoming a man. Soon he will start looking for a wife. She will not be just any woman. She will share her life to raise the next generation of patriarchs that will inherit the promises of God. God doesn’t leave anything to chance. The verse starts out, “Abraham was told, Milkah is also a mother”. Milkah is Sarah’s counterpart. She is the wife of Nahor, who is Abraham’s full brother.

God is not done with Abraham’s family. God has prepared someone to fulfill Isaac’s life and to bring the promised line through Abraham’s kin. As we look at this short genealogy we notice it traces Abraham’s kin down to a man named Bethuell. Bethuell will be important, because he is the father of a maiden named Rebekah. Nahor had a wife named Milkah. Milkah is to Nahor what Sarah was to Abraham. She was the most important woman in Nahor’s life. God is laying the foundation to fulfill for the promises made to Abraham to be fulfilled through Isaac and on through Isaac’s future son. Nothing is left to chance.

1 And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah. 2 And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

Sarah lived thirty-seven years after Isaac was born. Isaac is now a young man. She and her family are now back in Hebron, in the land of Canaan, which is near the great tree of Mamre. This is the area where Abraham had first come and built an altar and worshipped God. It is amid the land promised to Abraham and his descendants. This area is now the home of Isaac. Sarah is old and dies after living a long and fruitful life.

Abraham went to mourn and weep over her. She was the one person whom Abraham would listen, when he wasn't sure what to do. She is what the bible calls, the wife of Abraham's youth. One of the most important decisions any man or woman will make is who they will marry. Not all men and women are destined to be married. Those that are, I believe God has put a special person on the Earth for them. Many of us don't wait for that special person and endure many heartaches, because of it. Abraham was one of the most powerful men in the area. Kings feared him and his God. There was one person, in the land, that had no fear of Abraham. She had the ability to change his mind or to advise him that she thought he was wrong. She had the ability to make life wonderful or miserable. That person was Sarah. God used Sarah, to complete Abraham. God saw Abraham and Sarah as one unit, one person. The Bible says, Genesis 2:20 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. 23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." 24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

The marriage relationship was created by God. Many marriages today fail, because the couple moved in with one of the parents. Rather than having a relationship of becoming one flesh, the couple has a relationship of being part of

the parent's house. The husband is not the head of the house hold, because it's not his house. The two don't become a family, on their own. Abraham and Sarah started out in their father's house. God finally told Abraham to get away from his father, so he could become one flesh with Sarah. From that point, they grew up together. If ever Abraham had a problem and needed to share it with someone, who was looking out for his best interest, he could go to Sarah. Sarah and Abraham had gone through good times and bad times together. They had laughed and cried together. They each complimented the other. To Abraham, Sarah was the love of his life.

There was a time when Abraham wanted to find a way for his son Ishmael to receive the promised blessings of God. Sarah stood against Abraham and told him Hagar's son would not receive even a portion of the promises, which were to go to her son Isaac. Only her son would be the true heir of Abraham. Abraham struggled with the decision, but God told Abraham to listen to his wife Sarah and put away the son of Hagar. Genesis 21: 9 But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, 10 and she said to Abraham, "Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac." 11 The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son. 12 But God said to him, "Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.

God would take care of Ishmael. It was hard to let Ishmael go, but Abraham sent him away. In time things went well for Ishmael.

Now Abraham was faced with his greatest challenge and heartache of his life, the death of Sarah. Death is something we all face. Death is fatal one hundred percent of the time. It should be something a Christian can look forward to, but even with Christians there is a fear of the unknown. We all have a heavenly hope, for the future, but it's hard to let go of this life. I knew a man who was a pastor and teacher, for many years. One day he went to the doctor and was told he had cancer. He had prayed and counseled many church members, who had gone through cancer. He thought he understood what they were going through, until he was told he had cancer. For the first time he truly understood their fear. As he lay in the hospital, many friends told him they were praying for him. Most were

praying for a miraculous recovery. One friend told him she knew he was right with the Lord and it was time to look forward to glory. She told him she prayed for God to keep his sickness and time of suffering short and prayed for God to take him home. He told God to just ignore her prayers and to listen to the ones wanting him healed. He knew things would be better in heaven, but he wasn't in any hurry to get there and asked God to take his own good time. He had never understood what others were going through, when faced with life and death choices. Now he understood. God gave him several more years and he was grateful for them.

When Sarah died, Abraham began to mourn and weep. He greatly loved Sarah and would miss her. He knew he would see her in eternity, but he was going to greatly miss her now, she was gone. When a Christian loses a loved one, it is a time to mourn and weep. Over a period of time, a Christian will finally come to acceptance over the death of a loved one but it's something that takes time to overcome. God has designed us in a way that we need to go through the process. There are usually steps that humans go through to overcome the death of a loved one. Going through a time of mourning is a normal process.

The difference between a Christian and non-Christian is we have God on our side. As a non-believer, there is no hope at the end of life to look forward to, only a fear of the unknown. Abraham was a believer. He looked forward to a day when he and Sarah would be resurrected from the grave and be together again.

3 And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, 4 I [am] a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

Abraham admits he is a foreigner in the land. He is now about one hundred and thirty-seven years old. He's lived in the land of Canaan, since he was seventy-five. He's lived in Canaan for approximately sixty-two years. All this time, he has lived in a tent and never in a permanent dwelling. He was a foreigner in the land. God has said he would give all this land to his descendant, but so far Abraham doesn't own one square foot of it. He is a stranger in the land. Now he wants to purchase a parcel of land to bury his wife Sarah in. He knows the land around him will belong to his descendants one day and this will be his home. He doesn't want to bury Sarah in the old homeland of Ur. He wants to bury Sarah in the land of promise. He has a heavenly hope. He believes one day this will all be his land and

he believes in the resurrection and when he is resurrected into the promise of God, he wants he and Sarah to awaken and be at home, in the land of promise. He has a heavenly hope and by faith he believes God's promise.

5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, 6 Hear us, my lord: thou [art] a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

The Hittites tell him, you are a mighty prince among us. He owns great herds of cattle, sheep, goats, camels and donkeys. He may not own the land, but they have been willing, for all these years, to allow him and his livestock to live where ever he wanted. At first this was because they feared his God. Later it was because he was good for business. God has blessed Abraham in everything he did. God has also blessed all those who blessed Abraham. If he were to leave and take his livestock and other possessions with him, the economy of the region would collapse. They want him to stay and to be happy. They call him a great prince and tell him to take what ever parcel of land he wants to use as a tomb for his dead loved one. By giving him a parcel of land, it will give him a reason to stay among them and they will all prosper together.

7 And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, [even] to the children of Heth. 8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and intreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, 9 That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which [is] in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a buryingplace amongst you.

Abraham has always paid his own way. He didn't want anyone to ever say they had made him prosperous. His witness was, everything he had came from his God. He was a witness to all the people of the land. They could look at Abraham's life and successes and know his God was with him and his God was God. Abraham identifies the parcel of land he wishes to own and ask the people there to help him make a deal with Ephron to purchase the property. He doesn't want a gift, he wants a deal. He will purchase the property in front of the group of witnesses and it will transfer to him as a possession.

10 And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, [even] of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying, 11 Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that [is] therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead.

Ephron offers to give him the land.

12 And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land. 13 And he spake unto Ephron 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.

Abraham doesn't want the gift. He wants to complete a legal transaction that will let everyone know, Sarah is buried on his land.

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, 15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land [is worth] four hundred shekels of silver; what [is] that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.

Ephron sets a price for the land.

16 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current [money] with the merchant.

Abraham does not barter the price. He agrees to the price, so no one can doubt he doesn't fairly own the land.

17 And the field of Ephron, which [was] in Machpelah, 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 18 Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city. 19 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same [is] Hebron in the land of Canaan. 20 And the field, and the cave that [is] therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace by the sons of Heth.

Abraham purchases the field, which includes the field, the trees and the cave. The transaction is completed before many witnesses and receives the deed to the

land, showing paid in full. This was all done at the Gate of the city, which was like a court where this type of official process would be conducted. Abraham now owns a piece of land and it includes a cave that will be used for the tomb of his wife Sarah. Later it will continue to be used as the family tomb. At the time Moses wrote this section of Genesis many had been laid to rest in the family tomb. At that time, it included the bones of, not only Sarah, but Abraham, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah. The tomb and its location were well known to the Israelites. It is believed to be known today and is at the location of a Muslim Mosque and known as the grave of Abraham or the cave of Machpelah.

Abraham lived before there were Jews or Christians. Abraham was a Hebrew. Abraham lived a life of faith. Men of Abraham's time were in fear and awe of Abraham, because they were in fear and awe of Abraham's God.

The Bible says, John 8: 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad." 57 "You are not yet fifty years old," they said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!" 58 "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"

Jesus says Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing Jesus day; he saw it and was glad. When did Abraham see Jesus? Was it when the Lord came to him and told him to leave his homeland and go to a place he would show him? Was it when he paid tithes to Melchizedek? Was it when Abraham asked for the land of Sodom to be spared? Or maybe it was after Jesus died on the cross and went to Abraham's bosom, known as paradise. Maybe it was all the above. Abraham had a strong relationship with God. No man can look upon the father, but Jesus said, when you see him, you have seen the father. John 9: 35 Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

36 "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him."

37 Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you."

38 Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him.