

INTRO: Today we're going to cover two more chapters in the life of Abraham. Chapters at **the end of his life** which reveal **his Continued Trust in God**. * – *Expound on the (Prov 3:5-6) necessity in life!*

I. TRUSTING GOD IN SORROW (GENESIS 23) – Abraham has endured through so many tests, **NOW** he would have to learn to **trust God even in his sorrow!** You may recall what King Solomon said in (Eccl 3:1-2), *"To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: ² A time to be born, And a time to die..."* Death is inevitable for all!

A. ABRAHAM'S TEARS (1-2) – Sara died in Canaan at the age of **127**. *These were the Years of the her Life*. – **LIFE** may seem long to some but looking back in life, it seems so short! – As **the wife of Abraham Sara's faith was tested right alongside him**...enlisting her as **a heroin** in the **Hall of Faith (Heb 11:11)**. She was beautiful to behold but even more, she was a beautiful example for all godly wives to follow (1 Pet 3:1-6).

1. Abraham loved Sarah and it must have been very difficult to lose her. The text suggests that he may have been away when Sara died. He then came to her and "wept." – To **MOURN** is to express deep sorrow or regret for someone's death. **Grieving** happens as we come to terms with the idea that our loved one is no longer with us and that we are carrying their absence within. – **How does one grieve for the loss of a loved one?** (*Cry, Memories, Support Groups, Prayer, Scripture...*)

- (Psalm 34:18) says that *"the LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."* **God understands our grief** and offers to be with us and comfort us with promises from His Word and with the *"peace that passes all understanding."* (Phil 4:7)

2. The HOPE we have in Christ helps us move forward through grief. According to (Rev 21:4, NLT), no believer will experience *"death, sorrow, crying, or pain"* in eternity because **God Himself will wipe away every tear from their eyes** (Rev 7:17). This means that **Grief and Hope can Coexist!**

B. ABRAHAM'S TESTIMONY (3-6) – After a short time *"He stood up"* to secure a specific location among the sons of Heth, who viewed him as a **"Mighty Prince."** But Abraham saw himself as a **STRANGER** and an **ALIEN** in the promised land, whose primary concern was to *"bury his dead."*

- In a sense, **he had to carry out his Grief Duty** – When our loved one's pass, it is honorable to lay their body to rest, **which helps us grieve in a healthy way**. – In (vv. 5-6), we learn that **Abraham's life of faith was a huge testimony** to those who lived around him. (*If we want to make an impact on people's lives then live simply for God's kingdom and people will see the difference!*)

C. ABRAHAM'S TACTFULNESS (7-18) – God gave Abraham favor with the people, but he still demonstrated humility as he bowed himself to the people of land. – Abraham specifically wanted the **Cave of Machpelah**, which means *"double-doors."* (*Perfect for his princess Sara, but also for his family!*)

1. The CAVE was owned by **Ephron (23:9)**, but Ephron wanted to sell **THE WHOLE FIELD**. – When Ephron said he would give the field and the cave (3 x's in v. 11), **he did not mean it was free**. He knew Abraham was a wealthy man, so he began with his **Bedouin Bargaining tactics**. *"I give it to you."*

2. Though Abraham did not want **the whole field (12-13)**, he was willing to take it at a high price just to get the cave (15-16). **He paid 400 SHEKELS of silver!** Fair price was more like 100 shekels.

- **Abraham didn't even haggle back!** He agreed to **pay full price** to bury his dead. – **I can't help think about how Jesus Christ paid the full price for our sin to bring us back from the dead!**

3. The transaction was then finalized (17-18) in the presence of all the Hittites.

D. ABRAHAM'S TOMB (19-20) – Not only was Sarah buried in this cave, but soon after but Abraham (25:9), Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah (49:29–31; 50:13) would be laid to rest here also. – The **purchase of this cave** meant that **Abraham and Sarah would be buried in the PROMISED LAND**, even though it wasn't theirs until after they died. **They were sojourners!** (*Just passing thru!*)

- **As Sojourners...** we too are on this earth for a specific reason. While here, we are to be "*ambassadors for Christ*" (2 Cor 5:20), sharing the good news of the gospel with others so that they, too, may have a relationship with God. Throughout our stay here, we have a lot to discover, appreciate, and share, ultimately realizing that **all that is good, is a gift from God!**

CLOSING THOUGHTS: Because Abraham Trusted God in his time of Sorrow **he was able to think clearly.** Not only did he **'honor and bury his Dead,'** but **he also honored his God!** – **Are you able to trust God with your sorrow?** (Psalm 62:8) *Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah*

II. TRUSTING GOD'S SELECTION (GENESIS 24) – This is the **LONGEST CHAPTER** in Genesis, and **it's about how a man gets a wife for his son.** – Before Abraham died, he wanted to make sure that Isaac would continue in God's covenant promises (12:1-3; 13:15-16).

- **Theologically,** this chapter **pictures the Heavenly Father providing a Bride (church) for His Son.** Jesus expounds on this fact much later in the Parable of the Wedding Feast (Matt 22:1-14).
- **Matrimonially,** it provides **Great insight for those who desire God's will for their future mate.** **WHAT ARE THEY?** 1) Desire God's will (2-9) - 2) Be willing to obey (10-11) - 3) Pray for God's guidance (12-14) - 4) Be willing to trust God's plan (33b,49-51).

As we read this chapter, we'll find **four key elements** in how it happens, which **parallel** the story of **Isaac and Rebekah** and **Jesus and the Church.**

A. The WILL Of A FATHER (1-9) – Abraham is now **140 years old**, and he wants to get a bride for his son Isaac. Being a man of great resources, Abraham assigns his servant with **THIS GREAT TASK!** – **Who is Abrahams servant?** Quite possibly it could be **Eleazar of (15:2).** His very name means **"helper,"** which is an obvious attribute in this servant. (*Theologically, we see his role as a type of the Holy Spirit*)

1. **He ruled over all that Abraham had (2)** – A faithful and responsible steward. Because the matter was so serious, Abraham made his servant put his **"Hand under thigh,"** (*sig. closeness as to pay attention!*)
2. **He entered into a covenant with his master (3-9)** as **Abraham made him SWEAR 3 things:** 1) He was **NOT TO SELECT** a Canaanite wife for Isaac - 2) He was **ONLY TO SELECT** a near relative of Abraham – 3) Thirdly, and emphatically He was **NOT TO TAKE** Isaac back to his former home!
 - Abraham made him swear **because the LORD swore the Land to his descendants!**
 - Because he trusted in God's Selection, Abraham told him that God's Angel would pave the way.
 - Abraham did acknowledge the possibility of non-willingness on the woman's part of which the servant would be **"released from the oath."** – So, **the Servant Swore to the task and began.**

B. The WORK Of A SERVANT (10-49) – In this section we see his diligence to carry out his masters will...the servant who goes and does the work is a type of the HOLY SPIRIT. (who brings the Bride to the Son!)

1. He was **Obedient to His Master's Will (10-11)**, preparing an entourage with all his master's goods. He arrived in Nahor and rested at a local waterhole, knowing that women were tasked to draw water at evening time. (*A well was a place of refreshment and resting*).

2. He **Relied on the God of Abraham (12-14)** – As the servant prayed, he was not only standing by the well, but he was Standing in Faith, Trusting God to confirm His will. **[Totally Dependent]** – (Phil 4:6) *"...make your request known unto God!"* – Not only will God give you peace, but he will also answer in His perfect way. In this case...**immediately!** (*Ask God for His will to be confirmed!*)

3. His **Answer came Immediately (15-20)** – This reminds me of Jesus' instruction on **ASKING** in (Matt 7:7-8), *"ASK, and it will be given to you; SEEK, and you will find; KNOCK and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*

(15) – **Rebekah Appeared!** And she was the great niece of Abraham... She was **[Totally Qualified!]**, but the servant did not know yet.

(16) – **Rebekah was Beautiful!** She worked out every day... Ha! She was **[Totally Available!]**

(17-20) – **Rebekah's greatest quality ...She was a Servant!** – Verses (19-20), tells us that she actually drew water for 10 camels, which would take quite some time. **[Totally Hospitable!]**

4. He **Wondered in Amazement at the Favor of God (21-28)** – In verse (21) we see that the servant was in **[Total Wonder!]** As Rebecca worked, he watched her going back-and-forth retrieving water, and obviously thinking to himself! (*Even though 'Rebekah MAY BE God's selection for Isaac,' he "remained silent" wondering... probably a surreal moment for the servant*). **He knew that God was working, something special, though not fully confirmed.** When this occurs in our lives, we too, should remain silent... Wait on the Lord! (*Ponder and pray about what you are currently experiencing!*)

(22-25) - **Total Confirmation here!** – In verse (22) we see that **He abundantly Blessed Rebekah with Gifts!** As the servant was (*a type of the Holy Spirit*), he gave to Rebecca (*a type of the church*)... **beautiful gifts.** Likewise, the Holy Spirit gives gifts the Christ's Bride (**1 Cor 12,14; Rom 12; Eph 4**)

- He also inquired about her **Identity** and the **possibility of Lodging.** And her response absolutely blew the servant away! **She revealed that she was Nahor's granddaughter!** (*Abe's brother*)

(26) - He asked for divine guidance and followed his master's will for Isaac and **God LEAD HIM DIRECTLY to Abraham's family!** – **His Response: WORSHIP!** Gratitude and Awe was offered for God's Favor! (*Do you respond with worship to God for His marvelous works in your life?*)

(27-28) – The servant's recalled God's MERCY and TRUTH shown toward Abraham, who **Trusted God' Selection.** – **He found the right BRIDE because he was willing to ABIDE!**

- Notice that he wanted God's perfect will for the situation... He found it because he remained **"IN THE WAY."** – Likewise, **If we simply abide in the Lord,** walking with Him **in the way... He will show His perfect will for our circumstances.** **We don't need to waste our time figuring it out or struggling and striving to obtain...** Trust in God's Selection for your life, for your circumstances, for your future...let Him be your hope! We can just rest in His perfect will to be done in His perfect time! **In God WE Trust!**

(29-33a) - Here we see the first interactions with Rebecca's brother Laban... a very worldly man, characterized by greed and personal gain. He appears gracious only because he saw the many gifts that he gave to his sister. – I imagine his welcome... **“HELLO! Come in thou blessed of the Lord!”**

- Accommodations were then given to the servant and his entourage.

5. **The Servant's Focus (33b-41)** – His Focus was not on blessings, but on the errand! **(Stay Focused! Emphatically,** he declares **“I will not eat until I have told you about my errand.”** He then proceeds to speak of **his identity** (*Abraham's servant*) and **his master's greatness** (*Blessed of the Lord and with a son*), **who would inherit all!** – Expounding further he also **communicated his assigned task (37-41).** – And finally, he **communicated his journey (42-48),** which brought him to **his direct request (49),** **“Now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left.”** (*i.e., so as to determine what to do next, an intense moment for Laban & Bethuel!*)

C. The WILLINGNESS Of A BRIDE (50-60) – Here we see that **Faith allows people to do unexplainable things!** In (vv.50-51) – The servant's amazement. **Laban and Bethuel** confirm the Lord's sovereignty in the matter, of which those chose not to speak against! – **They immediately allowed the petition... “Here is Rebekah, take her and go!” Wow!** (*Truly the Angel of the Lord went before the Servant!*)

- After responding in worship (52), the servant also gave an **Abundant Dowry to Rebekah** to secure the agreement (53). (*i.e., a great price was paid to for her release!*)
- After a brief celebration (54), the servant desired to return to his master, **but was hindered (55)** by the family who wanted **Rebekah to STAY for a while** (*possible ten months!*) – But you gotta love the straight forwardness of the servant (56), **“Do NOT hinder me!”** (*Family and friends can often stir us away from obeying God's will! – i.e., don't be so religious, or Do what God told you, tomorrow!*)
- **Someone was wise enough to Ask Rebekah! (57-60)** – At which, by Faith she unhesitatingly replied “I Will GO!” – Wow, just as Abraham did, she was willing to leave it all behind for a promised future and a hope! (*As for you and I, the church! We too have never seen our Groom - Jesus Christ, but by faith we are willing to go right now...Amen!*) – **(1 Pet 1:8-9 NLT), You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. ⁹ The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls.** – At her request, they released her (59), and blessed her (60), with good will and favor. (*They trusted her to God's will*)

D. The WELCOME Of A SON (61-67) – Verse (61) tells us that the Entourage led by the servant was **en route... (here comes the bride!)** – Focus then shifts to Isaac, the groom in (62), which is fascinating, because Isaac was last seen coming down from Mt. Moriah after the sacrifice offering (22:13,19). –

1. **Now Isaac shows up after visiting** a place named **Beer Lahai Roi, i.e., “the God who sees.”** – We are then told in (63a), that Isaac **went into the field to meditate.** – **What** was he meditating on, **what** was he praying for? Possible mourning for his mother, or was it because **he knew** that **his Father made arrangements for his Bride?**

2. **The Encounter (63b- 65)** – Just then, **he lifted his eyes** and all of a sudden, out of nowhere BAM! **There she was.** And as Rebekah rode into her future, **she lifted her eyes** and **BAM! There he was!** [*This entire story makes clear that God chose Rebekah for Isaac!*]

- When she saw him, **she immediately dismounted** to meet him on foot, but she first **inquired if it was Isaac,** at which point the servant confirmed, **so she veiled her face** (*showing modesty*).

3. The Explanation (66) – ...was then provided Isaac of: the journey, the prayer, the confirmation, and **HOW God directed his path, as he put his Trust in Him!** (

4. The Embrace (67) – The betrothal began back in Nahor (v.53), and Isaac fell in love with Rebekah veil and all! But when the appropriate time came, Isaac took Rebekah into his mother's tent and loved her even more. This brought him great comfort, especially with the passing of Sara.

- *The marriage of Isaac and Rebekah did not begin with the love of the couple, but with the choice of the father to secure a bride for his beloved son (3-4). The story likewise teaches that **our betrothal began with the sovereign choice of God the Father** to take a bride for His beloved Son. Once we were selected, a high price was required to redeem us specifically. And we, like Rebekah, were invited to give up all in order to continue on the journey of this life to our own wedding, which would eventually be celebrated in a promised land.*

CLOSING THOUGHTS: In like manner God has sent the Holy Spirit to search for His Bride, ultimately to bring us to Jesus Christ one day. ***Are you making yourself ready? Everybody in this Room has to death with death! When our Bridegroom calls, we will meet Him in the air (1 Thess 4:17)***