

# The Father of Nations:

A Study of Abraham

**Lesson Eleven:** The death of the father of nations—*Genesis 22*

September 20, 2020

*“The very fact that Abraham buried Sarah in the land of Canaan is proof of his unwavering faith. Knowing that his descendants would have to endure four hundred years of bitter bondage in a foreign country (15:13), he looked beyond that to the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promise. The true saint has no buried hopes, only anticipation of a glorious future. Abraham is remembered for his far-reaching faith which caused him to look for a city ‘whose builder and maker is God.’”*

**John J. Davis**

**Opening Thought:** I get a little sad when I finish a good book and when I finish a teaching series

## I. Introduction/Review

### A. Remember that God had promised Abraham:

1. A great land
2. A prestigious name.
3. A multitude of descendants.
4. A wonderful relationship with God.

### B. How do you think that turned out?

## II. The Death of Sarah—*Genesis 23*

### A. Sarah was 127 years old when she died. v. 1

1. Sarah is the only woman in the Bible whose age is recorded upon her death. Why?
  - a) Because of Sarah’s significance.
  - b) Because of the specific significance of her age to the account.
2. This would mean that Isaac is 37.
3. Sarah got to live 37 years in the earthly enjoyment of God’s provision.
  - a) What a wonderful grace that God extended to her.
4. Sarah died in Hebron (Kiriath-Arba), which was populated by the sons of Heth (Hittites).
  - a) Notice that the phrase “which is in the land of Canaan” is added for clarity.
  - b) The point is that Sarah died in the promised land.

### B. Abraham mourns the death of Sarah. v. 2

1. We find 2 Hebrew words here, for emphasis:
  - a) He “mourned” (דפס) for her.
  - b) He “wept” (בכה) for her.

### C. Abraham made special burial arrangements for Sarah:

1. He took the initiative to approach the sons of Heth (Hittites).
2. He sought to buy a burial site. v.4
  - a) Notice his humility before them.
  - b) Notice how he asks for the burial site.
3. The sons of Heth were very open to his request. vv. 5-7
  - a) They offered Abraham any site that he wanted...even theirs!
  - b) Abraham bowed out of respect.
4. Abraham and the negotiation with Ephron
  - a) Abraham asks that Ephron be approached for a cave on his land.
  - b) Ephron offers to give the whole portion of land to Abraham.
    - (1) Is Ephron being generous?

- (a) Maybe. Perhaps Ephron would have just given him the field.
- (2) Is Ephron being pompous?
  - (a) Probably. Remember that everyone could hear him.
  - (b) It is hard to imagine that Ephron was unaffected by the peer pressure here.
- (3) Is Ephron being shrewd?
  - (a) If Ephron only sold the cave, he would still be on the hook for the taxes for the land.
  - (b) If Ephron sells the land with the cave, Abraham will have to pay the taxes.
    - i) “Thus Ephron the wealthy prince was reluctant to sell Abraham on the cave because he did not wish to remain responsible for the feudal services that the owner of the field must render.” Davis, 222
  - (c) Now, because of this great show of generosity, Ephron could basically name his price.
- c) Ephron names his price!
  - (1) “What is 400 shekels between friends?”
  - (2) Abraham paid immediately and took possession of the field and buried “his dead”.
- 5. Why is the fact that this land was deeded over to Abraham so emphasized?
  - a) Because this land would be Abraham’s by inheritance.
  - b) Because this is the only part of the land that Abraham would own during his lifetime.
  - c) This was an act of faith.

### III. The death of Abraham—*Genesis 25*

#### A. Abraham’s other wife.

- 1. Abraham took another wife, presumably after Sarah died.
- 2. There is some debate over when Abraham actually married her.
  - a) This is due to the fact that 1 Chronicles 1:32 refers to her as a concubine.
- 3. This marriage resulted in children.

#### B. Abraham’s fortune. vv. 5-6

- 1. He gave all that he had to Isaac.
- 2. He had already given gifts to his other children and sent them away while he was still alive.

#### C. Abraham’s longevity. v. 7

- 1. Abraham lived to be 175 years.
  - a) This was 75 years after Isaac was born.
  - b) This was 38 years after Sarah died.
  - c) This was 105 years after God called him.

#### D. Abraham’s legacy. v. 8

- 1. He lived to be a ripe old age.
- 2. He was satisfied with life.
- 3. He was gathered to his people.

#### E. Abraham’s burial. vv. 9-11

- 1. Notice that Isaac and Ishmael buried him.
  - a) This is important, as it implies at least a temporary reconciliation between Isaac and Ishmael.
  - b) This is also important, because the sons of Keturah are nowhere to be found.
- 2. Notice where Isaac lived after Abraham’s death.

### IV. Conclusion: The legacy of Abraham—*In this study we have seen that:*

#### A. Abraham was flawed.

#### B. Abraham was faithful.

#### C. Abraham was the father of nations.