



The Book of Genesis

Lesson Number 34



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED =Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), ERV =English Revised Version (1885), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT =Goodspeed (1923), GWN =God's Word (1995), IE= International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV= Literal Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV= Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT =Young's Literal Translation (1862)

GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT = Liddell Scott Lexicon, THAYER = Thayer's Greek Lexicon, LEH = LEH Lexicon, GINGRICH = Gingrich Lexicon

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, MANKIND, SIN, THE FIRST CHOSEN AND BLESSED NATION, THE FIRST CURSE, THE FIRST PROMISE, AND THE FIRST FAITH.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

SARAH DIES AND IS BURIED

Gen 23:1¹¹ 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. 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. 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. 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 entreat 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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." (Genesis 23:1-20)

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

After being married to Abraham for at least fifty-seven years, Sarah is

now one hundred and twenty-seven years old. Thirty-seven years before this, she gave birth to Isaac. Now, she

died, and Abraham mourns her departure. He has no land of his own, so seeks to buy a parcel of land in

At 127 years of age, Sarah died "in the land of Canaan," and Abraham bought a piece of land in which to bury her. – Given O. Blakely

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which to bury Sarah. Even though the owner offers to give the patriarch the land, Abraham insists on purchasing it for his own. He refers to his pilgrimage in the land, confessing that he has been a sojourner in it. Yet, he desires for some of the land to be legitimately owned by him for the purpose of burial – even though he knows God will eventually give him the whole land. **Yet, he does not own it yet, and must not proceed as though he does.** He insists that the price be fair – at local market value, so to speak. He will not purchase more than is necessary, as though he was going to remain there. A price was negotiated, and *“the field”* made sure to Abraham. So he buried Sarah, the *“mother of nations”* (Gen 17:15).

WHAT WE ARE LEARNING IN ABRAHAM

Abraham being *“the father of all them that believe”* (Rom 4:11), we are learning much about faith from the discriminating record of his life. By *“discriminating,”* I mean that God especially tailored the record of Abraham’s life. In this, he did not change the record in any way, or in any way misrepresent the patriarch. This record is not like a *“straw man,”* or fable of Abraham. **It is a very real**

record that accents his faith, showing how it impacted everything Abraham did. If men fail to obtain this perspective of Abraham, they will not profit from what the Spirit has said of him. This is something the critics of Abraham have failed to see. Spotting what they see as miserable failures, they try and make Abraham like the professing Christians of our time–i.e. making mistakes and blunders that showed his weakness.

What these fake academians have failed to see, is that Abraham is a pattern for believers, not a reflection of them. They are to rise to his standard, not make vain attempts to bring him down to theirs.

From the record of the calling of Abraham on, his life revolved around the promises of God. All of the appearances of God to Abraham, including visions and words from angels, accentuated God’s promises, assuring Abraham they would come to pass. **He lived within the framework of those Divine commitments, even though outward circumstances did not always comport with them.** That, of course, is what faith does. It reaches into the future and takes hold of what the Lord has promised, even if it contradicts what is seen with the eye.

WHAT HAS BEEN REVEALED ABOUT ABRAHAM

To this point, this is what has been revealed about Abraham.

(12:29-30).

- ➔ He left Ur of Chaldees with his father, wife, and nephew Lot (11:31-32)
- ➔ His arrival and increase in Haran (11:32).
- ➔ Abraham’s father, Terah, dies (11:32).
- ➔ Abraham’s call (12:1-3).
- ➔ Abraham departs from Haran with Lot, at the age of seventy-five (12:4-5).
- ➔ His arrival in Canaan (12:5-6).
- ➔ God appears to him in Canaan, promising to give him the land (12:7).
- ➔ Abraham moves to Bethel and builds an altar unto the Lord (12:8).
- ➔ Because there is a famine in Canaan, Abraham goes down into Egypt (12:10).
- ➔ Abraham’s confrontation with Pharaoh over Sarah (12:11-16).
- ➔ God’s judgment of Pharaoh (12:17-20).
- ➔ Abraham, being *“very rich,”* returns to Canaan, going to the place of the altar he built there at the first (13:1-4).

All of the appearances of God to Abraham, including visions and words from angels, accentuated God’s promises, assuring Abraham they would come to pass. He lived within the framework of those Divine commitments, even though outward circumstances did not always comport with them.

- ➔ His father and brothers (Gen 11:26-29)
- ➔ He married Sarah, who was barren

- ➔ Abraham and Lot are separated (13:5-13).
- ➔ God speaks to Abraham, telling him

to look at the land from a high place, promising to give him the land and multiply his seed. Then he told him to walk through the land, surveying it, as it were (13:14-17).

- ➔ Abraham moves his tent to the plain of Mamre, and built an altar there (13:18).
- ➔ After recording the success of four kings in that region, Abraham hears of the capture of Lot. He gathers 318 of his trained servants, and rescues Lot, pursuing and defeating all four of those kings with their armies (14:1-24).
- ➔ God appears to Abraham in a vision, revealing that He is Abraham's Shield and exceeding Great Reward (15:1).
- ➔ God reveals that Abraham's seed would be begotten from his own bowels, and that the offspring would be a vast multitude (15:2-5).
- ➔ Abraham believes in the Lord, and it is imputed to him for righteousness (15:6).
- ➔ God confirms His covenant with Abraham over some divided sacrificial animals and birds (15:7-12).
- ➔ God reveals Abraham's progeny would be oppressed in a strange land for 400 years, then come out of it with great substance (15:13-21).
- ➔ At the suggestion of Sarah, Abraham begets a child through Hagar in hopes that this would be the promised seed (16:1-16).
- ➔ At 99 years of age, God appears again to Abraham confirming His promise to him, establishing the covenant of circumcision, and announcing for the first time that Sarah would give birth to the promised seed (17:1-22).
- ➔ Abraham circumcises Ishmael, and all that were born in his house, and himself as well. Abraham was 99,

and Ishmael was 13 (17:23-27).

- ➔ The Lord appears to Abraham in the persons of three angels, confirming that Isaac would be born the next year (18:1-16).
- ➔ God reveals He is going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, and Abraham pleads for any righteous that may be there (18:17-33).
- ➔ The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the origin of the Moabites and Ammonites (19:1-38).
- ➔ Abraham's encounter with Abimelech (20:1-18).
- ➔ The birth and weaning of Isaac (21:1-8).
- ➔ The expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael from Abraham's house (21:9-21).
- ➔ Abraham makes a covenant with Abimelech (21:22-33).
- ➔ Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines (21:34).
- ➔ Abraham is tested by God, being commanded to offer Isaac as a burnt offering to God (22:1-19).
- ➔ Abraham is told of the children born to his brother Nahor, among whom was Rebekah (22:20-24).

DIVINE METHODOLOGY

In reporting the lives of key people in Scripture, the Lord carefully shapes how we will think about them. **He is directing us to consider these people in the same manner in which He considers them.** He obviously does not want men to think differently of these people than He thinks, which would put them at a variance with the Lord.

There is a remarkable consistency in this manner of revelation. If you are aware of them, ponder the facts that have been revealed about the following people. Consider that some of them lived several hundred years – in the case of Adam, nine hundred and thirty years.

PERSONAL HISTORY

◆ Adam – (930 yrs)	◆ Abraham (175 yrs)
◆ Eve (?)	◆ Sarah (127 yrs)
◆ Cain (?)	◆ Lot (?)
◆ Abel (?)	◆ Hagar (?)
◆ Nimrod (?)	◆ Ishmael (137 yrs)
◆ Enoch (365 yrs)	◆ Abimelech (?)
◆ Noah (950 yrs)	◆ Isaac (180 yrs)
◆ Ham, Shem, and Japheth	◆ Jacob (147 yrs)
	◆ Esau (?)

It is staggering to consider that both Adam and Noah lived nine hundred years, and yet they are both primarily known for only one thing that they did: Adam sinned, and Noah built an ark to the saving of his house.

The Reason for This Circumstance

There is a reason for the brevity of revelation concerning these people. **First, the objective of revelation is to divulge the nature and purpose of God.** This is done by His work with men, through whom we can learn – not about the men themselves, but about the God who assessed and used them. Only those facts that had to do with clarifying the purpose of God were made known. Also, facts are given that help us to see the impact of a relationship with God, or lack thereof, upon men. **Extended periods are involved at the first to show that the nature of man cannot be changed without an immediate work of God.**

Also, consider the following personalities who lived after the time of

PERSONAL HISTORY

◆ Moses	◆ The Sadducees
◆ Aaron	◆ The Lawyers
◆ The Prophets	◆ Nicodemus
◆ John the Baptist	◆ Mary Magdalene
◆ Zecharias	◆ Pilate
◆ Elizabeth	◆ Herod
◆ Mary the mother of our Lord	◆ Stephen
◆ Joseph	◆ Philip
◆ Simeon	◆ Paul
◆ Anna	◆ The Churches
◆ The twelve Apostles	◆ Barnabas
◆ Mary and Martha	◆ Silas
◆ Lazarus	◆ James
◆ The scribes and Pharisees	◆ Timothy
	◆ Titus
	◆ Lydia

Abraham. Above, I have listed a few.

The contemporary practice of psycho-analyzing people mentioned in the Scripture it flawed to the core. To begin with, we are not given a total history of them, but only what God wanted us to know of them. Secondly, these are people whom God either approved or disapproved, accepted or rejected. **To present such people in any other way is nothing less than**

men, the God who made them, or their peers?

I want to emphasize the seriousness of evaluating people mentioned in Scripture in a manner that differs from how God viewed them. This is not to be considered as either honest or truthful in any way.

Of the nine hundred and thirty years of Adam's life, we only know

nothing of the first 480 years of Noah's life, or of the first 70-75 years of Abraham's life or of the first 60 years of Sarah's life. Very little is known of the first forty years of Moses' life, or the first thirty years of John the Baptist's life. We only know of one personal detail of the first thirty years of Jesus' life. On the other hand, we are provided some details of Samuel's younger life, as well as David life during his teens.

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contending with God, and must be so viewed. After all, who can best assess

things relating to the first part of his life, through the birth of Seth. We know

BACK TO ABRAHAM

All of this is to say that God is building our perception of Abraham, and through him our understanding of faith. In him we see how believing God affects what men think and do. We also see the reaction of God to faith. Both of these reactions are consistent. God never fails to recognize and approve of those who have faith, and those who have faith never fail to honor God by shaping their lives around what He has told them.

AND SARAH WAS AN HUNDRED AND SEVEN AND TWENTY YEARS OLD

Gen 23:1 ***"And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah."***

AN HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN
"And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old . . ."

There are not many women in Scripture concerning which their age is told. There was Anna, whose age we have to calculate. It is said of her, *"she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years"* (Luke 2:36-37). We do not know the age at which she was married. If she was 13, she would have been 104 years of age (13 + 7 + 84). If she was 20, she would have been 111 (20 + 7 + 84). Of course, that is only speculation.

At any rate, I think Sarah is the only woman of Scripture whose age at her death was specified. We do not

know at what age she married Abraham. We do know she was ten years younger than him. When he was one hundred years old, she was ninety (Gen 17:17). That would have made her sixty-five when Abraham departed from Haran at the age of seventy-five (Gen 12:4). Thus her marriage to the patriarch had lasted for well over 60 years. Yet, we only knew of a few instances in which special things are said about her.

- ➔ 65 – When Abraham left Haran.
- ➔ 76–When Ishmael was born.
- ➔ 89–When Ishmael was circumcised.
- ➔ 89–When God appeared to Abraham telling him Sarah would bear Isaac the next year.
- ➔ 90–When Isaac was born.

THESE WERE THE YEARS OF SARAH'S

LIFE

" . . . these were the years of the life of Sarah."

The years of Sarah's life were filled with a variety of experiences.

- ➔ She left Ur of the Chaldees with Abraham.
- ➔ She dwelt in Haran with him.
- ➔ She journeyed to Canaan with him.
- ➔ She went down into Egypt with him.
- ➔ She spend some time in Pharaoh's house, as he took her to be his wife. God plagued his house, and she was delivered from that circumstance.
- ➔ She journeyed back to Canaan with Abraham.
- ➔ She was present when Abraham and Lot separated.
- ➔ She was involved in the birth of

At 127 years of age, Sarah died "in the land of Canaan," and Abraham bought a piece of land in which to bury her. – Given O. Blakely

Ishmael through Hagar, her handmaiden.

- ➔ She gave the counsel to cast out Hagar and Ishmael, which counsel was confirmed by the Lord.
- ➔ She was taken into Abimelech's house to be his wife, but was delivered by the hand of the Lord.
- ➔ She was with Abraham when the Lord visited him in the persons of three angels, and she prepared a meal for them.

- ➔ She gave birth to Isaac at the age of ninety.

What Is Said of Sarah

- ➔ God said of her, *"I will bless her"* (Gen 17:16a).
- ➔ Sarah is referred to as, *"a mother of nations."* (Gen 17:16a).
- ➔ It is written that *"kings of people shall be of her"* (Gen 17:16b).

Mentioned in Apostolic Writings

Sarah is mentioned three times in the apostolic writings.

- ➔ Romans 9:9 – Referring to the promise, *"Sarah shall have a son."*
- ➔ Hebrews 11:11 – Referring to her faith, through which she *"received strength to conceive seed."*
- ➔ 1 Peter 3:6 – Believing women are referred to as Sarah's *"daughters."*

Indeed, Sarah is a significant person in the Scriptures, although relatively little is known of her. **God has shaped how we think of her.**

AND SARAH DIED

"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 DIED IN KIRJATHARBA

"And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan..."

Sarah Died

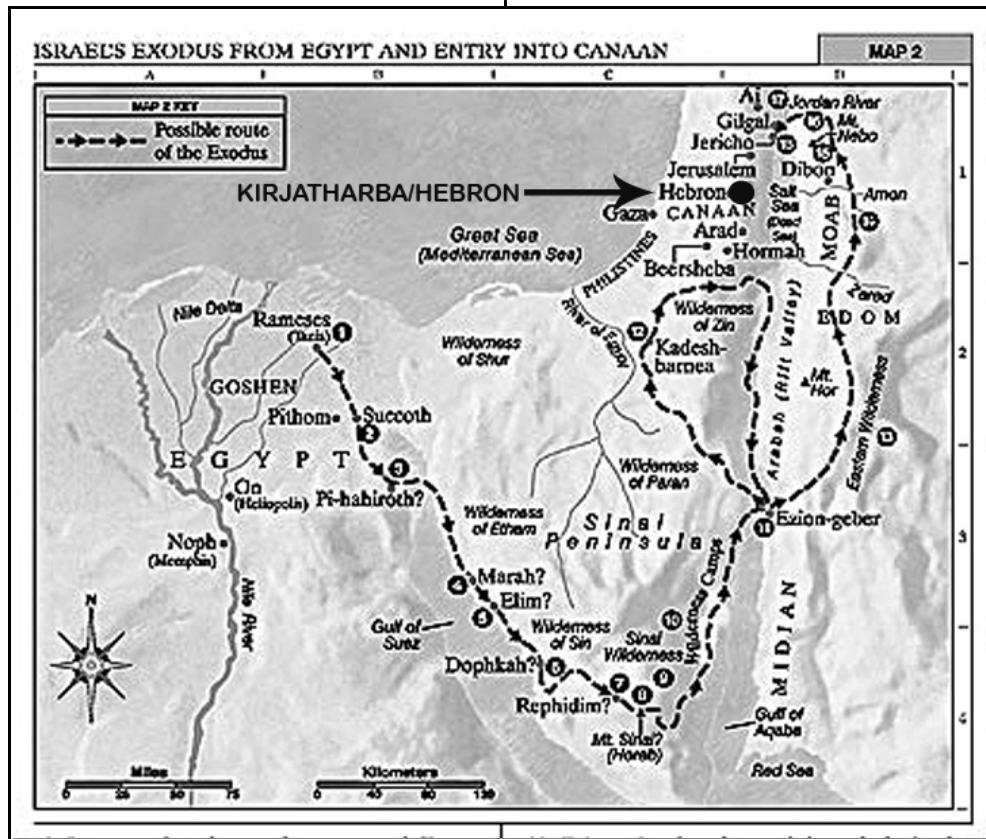
Here is another stern reminder that the death that was passed over the human race was effective. Adam and Eve were told, *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"*

(Gen 2:17). They immediately died spiritually, falling, as it were, into the caldron of death in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1). They also commenced to die in the flesh. Although the death did not come for hundreds of years, it did come. **The phenomenal duration of their lives was probably owing to the effects of the fruit of the tree of life, which took some time to disappear.** Even now, thousands of years after the consignment of the human race to death, it takes a proportionately long time for the body to finally succumb. One can only imagine how long bodies that were robust like those of Adam, and Eve, and immediate generations after them, lingered.

But, as with those before her, Sarah finally dies, at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven. **She may be the only woman in Scripture whose age is specified when she died – at least I know of no other at this present time.**

Fifty times in Scripture, we read the words *"he died,"* excluding four references to Jesus' death (*"He died"*). How true it is, *"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"* (Heb 9:27). Only two men were excluded from this experience:

- ➔ Enoch: *"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see*



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death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." (Heb 11:5)

➔ **Elijah:** *"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." (2 Kgs 2:11)*

Notice that the age of Sarah at the time of her death was decidedly less than that of those from Adam and those early generations.

- ➔ Adam – 930 (Gen 5:5)
- ➔ Seth – 912 (Gen 5:8)
- ➔ Enos – 905 (Gen 5:11)
- ➔ Cainan – 910 (Gen 5:14)
- ➔ Mahalaleel – 895 (Gen 5:17)
- ➔ Jared – 962 (Gen 5:20)
- ➔ Methuselah – 969 (Gen 5:27)
- ➔ Lamech – 777 (Gen 5:31)
- ➔ Noah – 950 (Gen 9:29)
- ➔ Terah – 205 (Gen 11:32)

I do not doubt that at the first, Satan tempted Adam and Eve to think they would not really die. After nine hundred years, according to appearance, it may have looked like that was true. However, death also has some accompaniments – like the dissipation of strength, the dimming of vision, and disease. How many of these were experienced by Adam, we do not know. **However, you may be sure that death cannot be experienced without experiencing what is associated with it.**

Eventually the average life-span leveled off, as it confirmed by the *"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away"* (Psa 90:10). This Psalm was written by Moses (Psa 90:1), who himself lived to be one hundred and twenty (Deut 31:2; 34:7). Joshua, Moses' replacement, lived to be one hundred and ten. David died at the age of seventy, beginning his reign at thirty, and reigning for forty years.

The point is that the average life-span of man diminished significantly until it leveled off at 70-80. All along the way, there were exceptions to the rule, with some dying at a younger age, while other died at an older one. **In view of this, Moses' 90th Psalm was a prophecy, more than a testimony of his time.**

Kirjatharba

This city is mentioned five times in Scripture.

- ➔ GENESIS 23:2 – The place where Sarah died.
- ➔ JOSHUA 14:15 – The former name of Hebron.
- ➔ JOSHUA 15:54 – Part of Judah's inheritance.
- ➔ JOSHUA 20:7 – The former name of Hebron.
- ➔ JUDGES 1:10 – The place where Israel went against the Canaanites.
- ➔ NEHEMIAH 11:25 – Where some Israelites were dwelling when Nehemiah came to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

The number of years from Sarah's death until when Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem was approximately 1,449 years. A long history for a city, indeed! *"Hebron,"* the later name of this place (Hebron), is mentioned seventy-three times in Scripture. It is not mentioned in the New Covenant Scriptures, being upstaged only by Jerusalem, which was near to it.

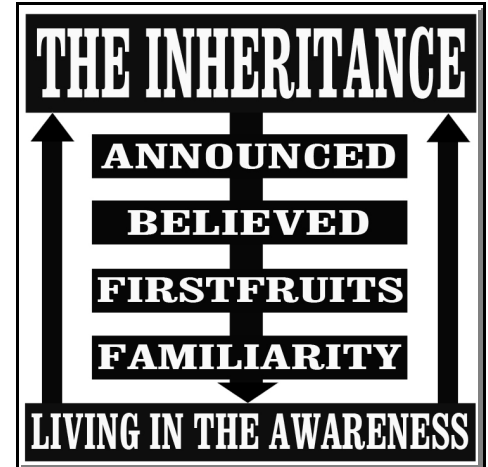
In the Land of Canaan

A note is made of the fact that the place where Sarah died was *"in the land of Canaan"* – the land promised to Abraham. **He had taken up residence in the land that was promised to Him.** The letter to the Hebrews says of this, *"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and*

maker is God" (Heb 11:10).

Thus, both Abraham and Sarah shaped their lives around the promise of God. They did not take up residence in Egypt, or Haran, or Ur of the Chaldees.

A Type of the Life of Faith



In this, Abraham and Sarah depicted those who are in Christ Jesus. **They too have received the promise of an inheritance** (Gal 3:18; Eph 1:11,14; Col 1:12; 3:24; Heb 9:15; 1 Pet 1:4).

There is a kind of pattern to the manner in which the inheritance is realized. First, it is announced. For those who believe the promise, as Abraham did, an introductory experience, or firstfruits, is given. For Abraham, it was beholding the lay the land. That was followed by walking through the land, and gaining familiarity with it. Then, by faith, there was living with a dominating awareness of the inheritance.

For believers in Christ, and in keeping with that inheritance, they choose to live in the land that has been given to them, even though they cannot yet enjoy its fulness. Having been seated together with Christ in the heavenly places (Eph 2:3-6), they, so to speak, walk through the land – the redemption that is in Christ Jesus – becoming acquainted with its manner and contents.

➔ Their affections are on the homeland

(Col 3:1-2).

- ➔ Their conversation, or citizenship, is in heaven (Phil 3:20-21).
- ➔ Their fellowship is with Christ, who is in heaven (1 Cor 1:9; Heb 9:24).
- ➔ They have come to a vast kingdom, the firstfruits of which they are enjoying now (Heb 12:22-24,28).
- ➔ Their lives are *“hid with Christ in God”* (Col 3:3).

Now, we are on the outskirts of the city, so to speak. Yet, there is an abundance of firstfruits to be enjoyed. As we imbibe them, we are preparing ourselves to receive the inheritance in its fulness. **Also, as we are becoming more and more acquainted with the benefits of redemption, we are become less and less desirous of the things of this world, as well as our tenure in it. We are living a preparatory life!**

ABRAHAM CAME TO MOURN FOR SARAH

“ . . . and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.”

In Scripture, there is always mourning at the passing of the righteous.

- ➔ When Jacob died, the Egyptians mourned for seventy days (Gen 50:3). Joseph, his brethren, and his father’s house *“mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days”* (Gen 50:10).
- ➔ When Moses died, Israel wept and mourned for thirty days (Deut 34:8).
- ➔ When Aaron died, Israel mourned for thirty days (Num 20:29).
- ➔ All Judah and Jerusalem mourned at the death of king Josiah (2 Chron 35:24).
- ➔ When Stephen was martyred devout men *“made great lamentation over him”* (Acts 8:2).

Oh, they did not lament and mourn as those who had no hope, nor did Abraham when he mourned the loss of Sarah. It was the absence of their comforting presence and godly influence that moved them to sorrow.

Those who glibly say that we should rejoice when the righteous die do not speak with spiritual intelligence. Yes, we do rejoice that they are *“present with the Lord.”* But make no mistake about this, we do sorrow – but *“not as those which have no hope”* (1

backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey; and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment” (Isa 59:14-15).

As was true in the days of Isaiah, so it is true today. This sort of thing displeases the Lord. It is written that His response included the following: *“For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation*

There is no way to estimate the seriousness of a system of religion that hides the Persons of God and Christ, underestimates the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and obscures the unimaginable power of faith and hope.

Thess 4:13). The removal of godly influence and brightly shining lights from our presence is a source of sorrow. Even though it is temporary, it is nevertheless very real.

For example, one can scarcely imagine the impact of the death of John the Baptist upon his disciples. In fact, Scriptures indicates the great heart of the Savior was touched by the departure of the one who baptized Him. It is written, *“And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus. When Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart . . .”* (Matt 14:12-13).

The Effect of Babylon the Great
With the change of focus, and the distortion and mitigation of the truth, **the perceived value of men and women of God has correspondingly dropped.** Institutional concerns and popularity with the religious masses has replaced the ascertained value of men and women of faith. **What occurred in the days of Isaiah is once again taking place.** *“And judgment is turned away*

upon His head; and He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak. According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the islands He will repay recompense” (Isa 59:17-18).

There is no way to estimate the seriousness of a system of religion that hides the Persons of God and Christ, underestimates the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and obscures the unimaginable power of faith and hope. Those who love the Lord with all of their heart and soul in the spiritual decadence of such times are at a decided disadvantage. It is more difficult to *“fight the good fight of faith”* (1 Tim 6:12) and hold on to the hope that is both *“steadfast and sure”* (Heb 6:17). People who do manage to do this by the grace of God are viewed as spiritual freaks, radical, impractical, and even cultist. It is because they do not contribute to the success of the organization, They do not fit into the fabric of stereotyped religion. They are like a piece of new cloth that cannot be sewed on to an old

garment without it tearing apart.

But such souls are precious in the eyes of the Lord. They are viewed as those cherished souls living during the remarkable spiritual decline of Israel. *"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him*

for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth His own son that serveth Him" (Mal 3:17).

What a difference there is

b e t w e e n God's assessment of those who are faithful to Him in the earth, and that of the casual and uninformed! Where men and women are living by faith and walking in the Spirit, a great value is placed upon all others who live in such a manner. They are not impressed by worldly greatness.

I AM A STRANGER AND A SOJOURNER

"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."

STOOD UP BEFORE HIS DEAD

"And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth . . ." Other versions read, "from beside his dead wife,"^{NIV} "from beside his dead,"^{NRSV} "from the funeral obsequies,"^{DARBY} "from the sight of his corpse,"^{GENEVA} "from mourning his dead wife,"^{NET} "from the presence of his dead,"^{YLT} "standing beside her body,"^{LIVING} "he left his dead wife and went to talk to the Hittites,"^{ERV} and "left the place where his wife's body was lying."^{GNB}

Notice that although Abraham came to mourn the passing of Sarah, yet he was in full control of his mental faculties. He was not so distraught that he could not reason or discuss critical matters.

Faith has a power that sustains the heart and mind in times of sorrow, crisis, spiritual battle, and other deep and profound feelings. When a person chooses to live on the periphery of spiritual life, all of this is forfeited.

I AM A STRANGER AND A SOJOURNER

" . . . saying, "I am a stranger and a sojourner with you . . ." Other versions read, "a foreigner and a visitor,"^{NKJV} "alien and a stranger,"^{NIV} "living among you as one from a strange country,"^{BBE} "a temporary

settler among you,"^{NET} "Here I am, a visitor in a foreign land,"^{LIVING} "a sojourner and an immigrant,"^{ABP} "I live as a foreigner in your land,"^{CEV} "I'm a stranger with no permanent home,"^{GWN} and "an alien and an outsider."^{ISV}

This was the land Abraham would inherit, and yet, **while it was under the dominion of others, he considered himself a foreigner in it.** He would not consider the land to be thoroughly his until he had taken possession of it, and the enemies were no longer in it.

How Long Had Abraham Been in the Land?

The gravity of Abraham's perspective can be seen by a brief consideration of how long he had been in the land of Canaan. **A conservation estimate would be sixty years, as indicated by the chart below!**

HOW LONG WAS ABRAHAM IN CANAAN?	
AT THE TIME SARAH GAVE HAGAR TO ABRAHAM.....	10 YRS
AT THE TIME ISHMAEL WAS CIRCUMCISED (13 YEARS).....	+13 YRS
AT THE TIME ISAAC WAS WEANED (3 YEARS).....	+3 YRS
AT THE TIME SARAH DIED (127 YEARS).....	+34 YRS
ESTIMATED YEARS.....	60 YRS

Sixty years, and still a sojourner and a stranger, no part of the land belonging to him. That is not all. Isaac would live one hundred and eighty years (Gen 35:28) maintaining the same

posture. Jacob would live one hundred and forty-seven years (Gen 47:28) doing the same. **Thus, the land promised to them was occupied by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for a collective period of three hundred and eighty-seven years – yet they all "sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country"** (Heb 11:9).

Those who are in Christ Jesus

Those who are in Christ Jesus are in the same position – occupying a land they have been promised, yet which is not yet theirs. Our Lord has promised us that the earth itself is part of our inheritance: *"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."* (Mat 5:5; Psa 25:13; 37:9,11,22).

The saints are addressed as *"Dearly beloved . . . strangers and pilgrims,"* who are to *"abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation"* (1 Pet 2:11-12). Solemnly they are admonished, *"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear"* (1 Pet 1:17).

As long as we are *"in the body"* (2 Cor 5:6; Heb 13:3), we can never rise above the status of *"strangers and pilgrims" in this world.* This is why the message of health and wealth, and the gospel of prosperity are so wrong. They herald a perspective that comes from

the devil, not from God. **It is the devil who offers a here-and-now inheritance**, even as he did to the Lord Jesus. *"And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine"* (Luke 4:5-7).

That is the optimum that the devil has to offer – and it all pertains to *"this present evil world"* (Gal 1:4). Maintaining the sanctified posture of a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth serves to neutralize the temptations of the wicked one.

A Necessary Distinction

There is a distinction enjoyed by those who are in Christ Jesus that makes them different from Abraham, though related to him by their faith. It is

This is the nature of faith. It relies upon the promise of God without doubting – even though everything detected by the human senses shouts that it is not so.

that they have been *"born again"* (1 Pet 1:23), *"created in Christ Jesus"* (Eph 2:10), being made *"a new creation"* [creation] (2 Cor 5:17), and experiencing *"the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit"* (Tit 3:5). There is *"the new man"* which can be *"put on,"* which *"after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"* (Eph 4:24).

Because of this distinction, the *"new creation,"* or *"new man,"* has been *"raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"* (Eph 2:6). Unlike Abraham in the world, or the part of us that remains in the world, we are not *"strangers and pilgrims"* in these *"heavenly [places]."*

However, those *"heavenly*

places," in which there is an abundance, still, so far as access is concerned, only contains the *"firstfruits of the Spirit"* (Rom 8:23). The full inheritance is not accessible. Like Israel when they entered Canaan, the whole of the promise is not yet experienced by us, even though it is reserved for us (1 Pet 1:4). **Compared with the type of the Tabernacle, we are in the Holy Place, anticipating our entrance into the Most Holy Place.**

In the world, however, and make no mistake about it, we are *"strangers and pilgrims,"* with our primary citizenship in heaven. As with Abraham, our faith has produced this condition. Where professing Christians are really not strangers and pilgrims in the world, either their faith is sadly lacking, or they have no faith at all.

GIVE ME A POSSESSION

" . . . give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight."

This request must be read with the promise of God in mind. **The land had been clearly promised to Abraham, yet at an advanced age, he still does not have a single parcel of the land for his own.** He therefore makes an effort to obtain part of the land to bury Sarah, doing so because he does not have any immediate possession of the land.

The Land Was Promised to Abraham

Stephen says of Abraham and Canaan, *"And He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on"* (Acts 7:5). I do not believe this statement was ever made to Abraham, although he doubtless deduced this to be this case from his experience. **In other words, he had to accept the reality of the inheritance by**

faith, with no visual or sensible evidence of it. That, of course, is what faith does, for it *"is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"* (Heb 11:1). In the Kingdom of God, reality is not established to the heart by any of the human senses. In fact, it may appear nothing more than an imagination to every human means of establishing a fact.

God's Promise Confirms It Factualness

The fact that God commits Himself to do something, and then announces it, makes it true. Take, for example, the promise of the land in which Abraham is sojourning at the time of this text. God Almighty had promised it to him.

➤ GENESIS 13:15 — *"For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."*

➤ GENESIS 13:17 — *"Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."*

➤ GENESIS 15:7 — *"And He said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it."*

➤ GENESIS 17:7-8-9 — *"And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."*

God promised the land to Isaac

GENESIS 26:3 — *"Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father."*

The Lord also promised it to Jacob

GENESIS 28:13 — *"And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and*

the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed."

A Statement of the Condition

Having a more thorough understanding of the ways of God, Paul; makes the following statement in the letter to the Hebrews. *"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"* (Heb 11:8-10).

Thus Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – the fathers to whom the promise of the land was given all sojourned in *"the land of promise, as in a strange country"* – i.e. a country in which they held neither citizenship nor real estate. For a collective period of 387 years, they lived in the land promised to them without owning any portion of the land sufficient to sustain life or contain their offspring. The only exception is the small piece of land Abraham now attempts to procure.

When professing Christians settle down in the world, become friends with it, compromise with it, succumb to delusion, and live in a sloven manner, they are putting their unbelief on display.

THE NATURE OF FAITH

This is the nature of faith. It relies upon the promise of God without doubting – even though everything detected by the human senses shouts that it is not so.

For those in Christ Jesus, if the Lord says He gives them *"eternal life,"* and *"they shall never perish,"* and that no man shall be able to *"pluck them out"* of His hand (John 10:28), they proceed to live with that in mind. If He says they will *"inherit the earth,"* they believe it, and shape their lives around that promise (Matt 5:5). If they are promised, *"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together"* (Rom 8:17), **they refuse to give their hearts to anyone else, and are**

unwavering in not judging things according to appearance.

Those who believe know that God *"cannot lie"* (Tit 1:2), and therefore they rely on what He has promised. Faith never doubts, and never staggers, never causes disappointment.

When professing Christians settle down in the world, become friends with it, compromise with it, succumb to delusion, and live in a sloven manner, they are putting their unbelief on display. They are confirming that they are **not** the children of Abraham – that whatever they call faith is really nothing more than a charade that will, cost them their soul. If that seems strong, it is really not nearly strong enough! Faith is never ineffective – never!

AND THE CHILDREN OF HETH ANSWERED ABRAHAM

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

Abraham has lived his life in an honorable manner among these people, and they have taken due note of it. Now, they express their perception of him.

THE CHILDREN OF HETH

"And the children of Heth . . ."

Heth was the offspring of Canaan, who was cursed by Noah to be a *"servant of servants"* (Gen 9:25). In the long-view of the situation, these people would be subservient and inferior to the children of Israel. At an early period of time, however, they appeared to be dominant, occupying and ruling the land of Canaan – or at least a portion of it. However, when the time for the Divine agenda came to pass, they would instantly be thrust into the background. Their interests would be terminated, and they would have to yield to the offspring of Abraham.

At the point of our text, this time

had not yet come, and Abraham knew it. Notwithstanding, he had maintained his life in such a manner, that even these people did not think of him as their servant.

THE ANSWER OF THE CHILDREN OF HETH

" . . . answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchers bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. . . "

Thou Art A Mighty Prince Among Us

At 127 years of age, Sarah died *"in the land of Canaan,"* and Abraham bought a piece of land in which to bury her. – Given O. Blakely

Other version read, “a great chief among us,”^{BBE} “a prince of God,”^{ASV/CJB/DARBY/GENEVA/YLT} “God’s chosen one among us,”^{CSB} “a mighty leader,”^{GWN} “thou art in the midst of us a king from God,”^{SEPTUAGINT/BRENTON} “You are an elect of God,”^{NAB/TNK} “an honored prince of God,”^{LIVING} “a king by God,”^{ABP} “a great leader,”^{ERV} “you’re no mere outsider here with us, you’re a prince of God!,”^{MESSAGE} “prince of Elohim.”^{INTERLINEAR}

The Hebrew word translated “mighty” is מְלִיחִים {el-o-heem’}. The meaning of the word is “(1A “RULERS, JUDGES 1B) DIVINE ONES 1C) ANGELS 1D) GODS 2) (PLURAL INTENSIVE - SINGULAR MEANING) 2A) GOD, GODDESS 2B) GODLIKE ONE 2C) WORKS OR SPECIAL POSSESSIONS OF GOD 2D) THE (TRUE) GOD 2E) GOD.”^{STRONGS} The literal translation is “PRINCE OF ELOHIM.”

The Pulpit Commentary adds, “A PRINCE OF ELOHIM; NOT OF JEHOVAH, SINCE THE SPEAKERS WERE HEATHEN WHOSE IDEAS OF DEITY DID NOT TRANSCEND THOSE EXPRESSED IN THE TERM ELOHIM.” **This is foolish observation**, for Abimelech, the leader of these people had a personal encounter with God, and full well knew who he was dealing with. He further told “all his servants” of the occurrence, quickly conforming to the command issued to him by God: “restore the man his wife, for he is a prophet” (Gen 20:3-8). **It is inexcusable for any supposed expositor of Scripture to treat this saying as a mere acknowledgment of earthly greatness!**

Godly commentators of the past who have recognized this as a confession that Abraham was a prince of God include John Gill, John Calvin, Albert Barnes, Adam Clarke, Keil & F. Delitzsch, Matthew Henry, and others. Their view is not what solidifies its meaning. **It only confirms that men of great faith have more insight than those with worldly expertise in language.**

A Confirmation of God’s Promise

The saying of the children of Heth was verbal confirmation of what God had promised Abraham: “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing” (Gen 12:2). **This is precisely what has started**

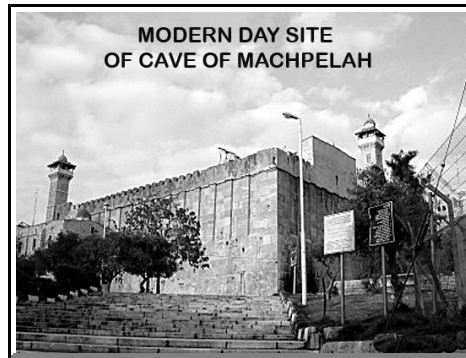
to take place – and the greater part of that promise is yet to come.

GIVE ME THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH

“ . . . And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and entreat 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.”

The Cave of Machpelah

Abraham asks for a particular piece of property – “the cave of Machpelah.”



This cave was located near to Mamre, “which is Hebron” (Gen 13:18), where Abraham had chosen to dwell (Gen 13:18; 14:13). This was the place in which the Lord appeared to him, confirming the promise of Isaac (Gen 18:1). Isaac also sojourned in Mamre (Gen 35:27). Five times this piece of property is said to have been “before Mamre,” or “near Mamre”^{NIV}, or “faced Mamre”^{NASB} (Gen 13:17; 23:19; 25:9; 49:30; 50:130). Once the complete association is seen in the phrase, “the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan” (Gen 23:19). Once the very precise statement is made, “In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan” (Gen 49:30).

The death and burial of Sarah was the first of this chosen generation – chosen to be blessed and instrumental in the fulfilling of the coming and

accomplishments of the promised “Seed of the woman.” You see how that Abraham carried out the burial of Sarah with the promise of God in mind. He did not bury her in Ur of the Chaldees, where she spent her first 60-65 years. Nor, indeed, did he bury her in Haran, where they had spend some time, and increased their possessions. **In prospect of God’s promise, he buried her in Canaan, even though, at that time, he possessed no part of it.**

Lessons to Be Learned

Our pilgrimage is much like that of Abraham. Our final destination has not yet been realized. Yes, we have been “seated with Christ in heavenly places” (Eph 2:6). **Though very real, it is a transaction that has been realized by faith.** As long as we are in the body, we are stewards of what we have, which must be returned to the Master with accrued interest.

However, like Abraham, we are living in prospect of the coming inheritance while we walk about in its vestibule. **However, and make no mistake about this, we treat both life and death in strict association with the fulfillment of the promised inheritance.** Those who do not do this are not children of Abraham, regardless of their profession.

In view of the pilgrim-posture, let your earthly associations be as close to the promised land as possible – like the cave of Machpelah! Live within the border of the promised land, even though it is presently unseen.

The posture of those who are in Christ Jesus is that of a stranger and pilgrim in the earth. **We were not recreated in Christ Jesus for this world.** It is not our home. Its goods are not our true possessions. Its citizens are not our true family. We are spending time in the world, while not being a part of its decaying system. The family of God does not feel at home in “this present evil world” (Gal 1:4). Their primary family is **not** here. Their real treasures are **not** here.

The truth of the matter is that we

do not own what we presently have in salvation. We are stewards of it, and we will be required to give an account of how we handled this *“great salvation.”* It will be a grievous experience for those who have invested mere pennies of life’s currency, rather than choosing to *“lay up”* for themselves *“treasures in heaven”* (Matt 6:20). They only gave a small proportion of their time and resources to the Lord. Their lives were dominated by an interest in the temporal, rather than eternal, things. Their participation in the fellowship with Christ into which they were called (1 Cor 1:9), was only, at the very best, minimal. Their ingestion of the Word of God was so small it could hardly be measured (Lk 4:4). They did not *“put on the new man”* (Eph 4:24), *“put on the whole armor of God”* (Eph 5:10-18), or utilize the *“weapons of our warfare,”* which are *“mighty through God”* for the casting down of strongholds, and bastions of thought that militate against the knowledge of God (2 Cor 10:3-4). They forsook the gathering of themselves together with the saints (Heb 10:25), having other interests that overshadowed such holy

conclaves. They did not *“live by faith”* (Heb 10:38), *“walk in the Spirit”* (Gal 5:16,25), or continue *“steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord”* (1 Cor 15:58). In the stewardship of their money, they *“robbed”* God (Mal 3:8). They lived as though this was the only world, and they never would die or face the judgment of God.

Whatever may be said of such people, they are not *“strangers and pilgrims”* in the earth (1 Pet 2:11). **Whether men wish to acknowledge it or not, eternal life has not been promised to those who have such traits!** There is really no kind or palatable way to say it. It is on the part of wisdom for every professing Christian to take seriously the admonitions, *“work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”* (Phil 2:12), and *“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul”* (1 Pet 2:11).

Ownership of what the Lord has promised will only be realized in the world to come. While we are here, we

are being tested. Our faithfulness is being tried.

NONE OF US WILL WITHHOLD HIS SEPULCHER

“... in the choice of our sepulchers bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulcher, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. . .”

Because they both honored and feared Abraham, the sons of Heth declared that any one of them would be unwilling to withhold their personal sepulcher from Abraham. They would give it freely, and without any qualms. That is how much they had come to respect this man of God.

However, there were some things they did not realize. More was involved here than the burying of Sarah. Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah would be buried there (Gen 25:9; Gen 49:31). Jacob would also be buried there (Gen 50:12-13). Those saints died *“in hope.”* This was confirmed by the place of their burial in Canaan, where none of the above, at the time of their demise, had advanced beyond being a stranger and a pilgrim.

ABRAHAM ANSWERS

“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 entreat 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.”

We care being exposed to how a man of faith reasons. If this fact escapes our attention, we will not be able to benefit from this text. This is how a man who lives by faith things. It reflects how he perceives things.

ABRAHAM STOOD UP

“And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth . . .”

From a seated position, the patriarch stood up, giving focused attention to the matter at hand. Abraham did not bow in worship, but out of respect for those who had expressed such willingness and concern. His demeanor was that of a kind and gentle man.

IF IT BE YOUR MIND

“And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me . . .”

In saying Abraham *“communed with them,”* or *“spoke to them,”* ^{NKJV} the personal nature of his words is

emphasized. This would be compared with making a speech. This is more of an attempt to bring the sons of Heth by his side to reason on this matter, assisting them to think as he is thinking.

“If it Be Your Mind”

Other versions read, *“If it is your wish,”* ^{NKJV} *“If you are willing,”* ^{NIV} *“If you will let me,”* ^{BBE} *“If it please your soul,”* ^{DOUAY} *“If you will allow me room,”* ^{NAB} *“If you consent to my removing my dead for burial,”* ^{NJB} *“Since this is your feeling in the matter,”* ^{LIVING} *“If you really want to help me bury my dead wife,”* ^{ERV} and *“If you’re serious about helping me give my wife a proper burial.”* ^{MESSAGE}

This statement is made in view of their confessed willingness to give up any of their sepulchers for the burial of Sarah. Abraham, however, has

something more in mind. He now presses the matter to ensure that he can obtain the plot of land he prefers.

THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH

"Situated beneath a large rectangular Herodian era structure, the series of subterranean chambers is located in the heart of Hebron's old city in the Judean hills. The shrine is the world's most ancient Jewish site and the second holiest place for the Jewish people, after Temple Mount in Jerusalem. According to the Book of Genesis, the cave and adjoining field were purchased by Abraham some 3700 years ago." JEWISH VIRTUAL LIBRARY www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org

"The building over the tomb is truly amazing in its dimensions, complexity and antiquity. Huge walls built by Herod the Great 2,000 years ago surround it, while the interior is a combination of medieval architecture, Arabesque décor from later centuries, and synagogues founded after the reestablishment of the Jewish community here following the 1967 Six Day War.

In one corner of the largest hall, with its house-like tomb markers for Isaac and Rebecca, a cupola stands over a small opening into the actual Cave of Machpelah. Another, smaller room contains the tombs of Abraham and Sarah, and across an open courtyard are those of Jacob and Leah." <http://www.goisrael.com/>

Abraham is also making clear that he is not making a request for a large allotment of land. It might be thought that, because he was a "mighty prince" among them, this was an initiative designed to enlarge his possessions. This would tend to view Abraham as prominent among the sons of Heth, which is not the kind of prominence he sought. God had promised him the whole land, and the thought of sharing it with the sons of Heth did not enter into his mind. His thinking was molded by the promise of God, not the offer of the sons of Heth.

A PARTICULAR REQUEST

"... and entreat 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."

The Location of The Cave of Machpelah

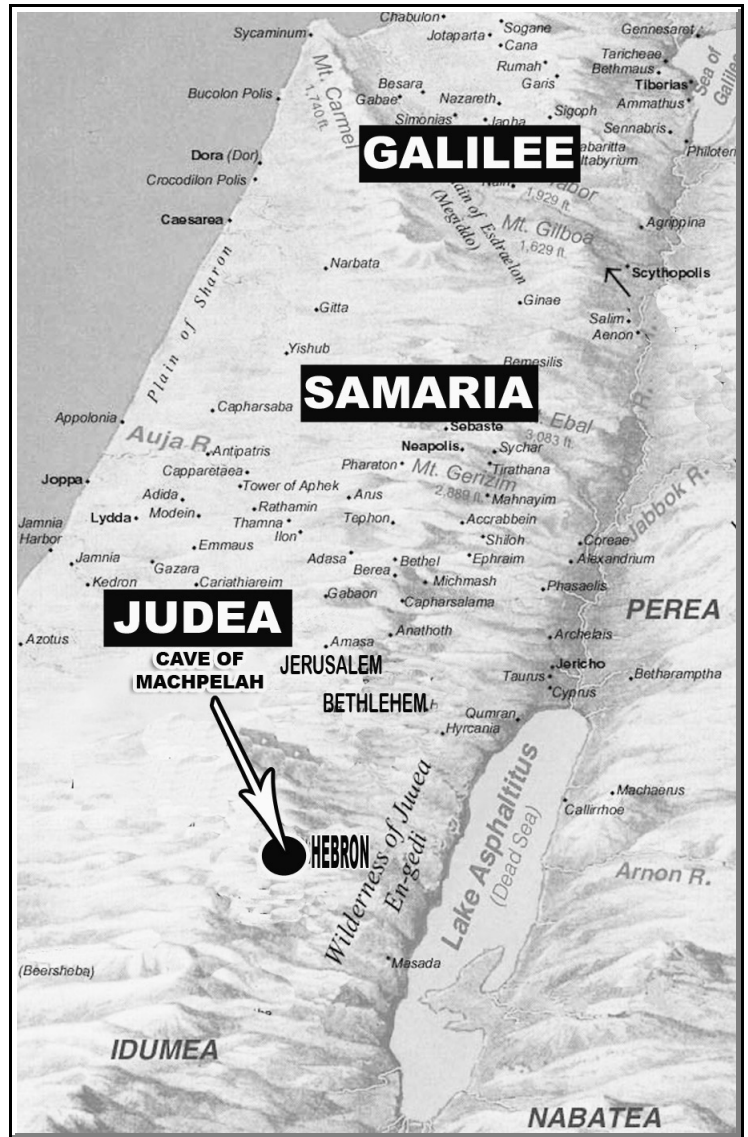
The cave of Machpelah was

located in, what later would be called, the region of Judea. It was south of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, which were located in the heart of Judea. What an appropriate place for the patriarchs to be buried, together with their wives. Only Rachel was not buried there, being buried while Jacob was journeying in Canaan. He buried her in, what would later be called, Bethlehem, which was not far from the cave of Machpelah. Jacob's words concerning this are written. "And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem." (Gen 48:7).

Behold what value "the fathers," Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, placed upon Canaan – the land of promise. Even though they were strangers and sojourners in it, and did not own a part in which to live, yet they placed all of the values there, looking forward to the time when their progeny would inherit and dwell in the land.

Abraham's Selection of the Place

Not only was this near to the place where Abraham was dwelling (Mamre), but it was in the very heart of the promised land. It was also at the end of Ephron's field, or land. We would call it his property. He did not ask for a



parcel of land in the middle of Ephron's property, or close to his dwelling. His selection would in no way interfere with the activities of Ephron.

You see, then, how Abraham joined the honor of God and consideration of men together, making a choice that confirmed the priority of God's promise, and, at the same time, caused the least interference with the duties of others.

In Christ, a decision like this would be seen as "acceptable to God, and approved of men" (Rom 14:18). Believers should be noted for such decisions and thoughtfulness. Of course, it is to be understood that no one trusting in the Lord will displease God in order to please men. Nor, indeed, will they

prefer friendship with the world with closeness to the Lord. As was written to some who were carnally minded, yet claimed they had faith, *"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God"* (James 4:4).

The Necessity of Proper Values

It is imperative that those in Christ Jesus, like Abraham, maintain proper values. **From the very first time God called Abraham, his life centered in the promised land and the promised seed.** He thought about those promises when he journeyed to Canaan – a trip of about 1,500 miles. He thought about them when he confronted a famine in

A thoughtless person would conclude that this was a special blessing from the Lord. Such would reason, "Such generosity could not be mere coincidence." Now Abraham can have even more than he asked, and that without cost.

Canaan. He pondered them when he thought someone might take Sarah for their wife. He considered them when he thought upon his own impotence and Sarah's barrenness. He thought about them when he built altars, when he was asked to offer Isaac, and even when Sarah died.

There you have the impact of believing upon the individual possessing faith. Where thoughts are not consistently shaped around the promises of God, by which we are made *"partakers of the Divine nature"* (2 Pet 1:4), faith is lacking, and the future is anything but favorable! **The absence of this perspective in the modern church is cause for concern.**

EPHRON THE HITTITE ANSWERED ABRAHAM

"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."

WHERE EPHRON MADE HIS STATEMENT

"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 . . ."

Here is a member of a cursed nation – the Hittites. That nation was one of bodies of people whom Abraham's seed would displace (Gen 15:). God confirmed this to Moses (Ex 3:8,17). Moses told Israel of this promise after they had come out of Egypt (Ex 13:5). God told Israel His "angel" would go before them, bringing them into the land from whom the Hittites would be "cut off" (Ex 23:23). Before he died, Moses again reminded the people that they were given a land

that was occupied by other nations, whom they were to drive out – the Hittites were among those nations (Deut 7:1). When Joshua took the leadership of Israel, God told him He was going to give them *"all the land of the Hittites"* (Josh 1:3-4).

Yet, at this time, the Hittites were allowed to live in the land. In fact, here is a man who had respect for Abraham, and was quite willing to do what he could to be of assistance to the patriarch. **This is because the iniquity of people in that region had not yet reached its fulness** (Gen 15:16).

A Lesson to Be Learned

We must learn from this that things that have been cursed, or condemned to oblivion, are not wrong of themselves. If used properly, they can be of assistance to us during our pilgrimage. The earth and all that is within it, for example, has been cursed, and will eventually pass away by an act of Divine judgment. Yet, for a season, we may *"use this world, as not abusing it,"* or *"not thoroughly engrossed in the things that are in it"*^{NIV} (1 Cor 7:31).

This will require the wisdom that

comes down from above (James 3:17). As with Abraham, the stance of a pilgrim must be maintained while we *"use"* the things of this world. The truth of the matter is that we are passing through this world in the expectation of inheriting it when it has been cleansed from the effects of sin by Divine fire (2 Pet 3:7). What we will inherit will be *"a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"* (2 Pet 3:13).

I GIVE IT TO YOU

" . . . saying, 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."

Abraham had asked for *"the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field"* (Gen 23:9). Now, out of a generous spirit, Ephron offers to give Abraham the whole field, as well as the cave of Machpelah that was in the end of the field. He made this commitment *"in the presence of the sons"* of his people.

A thoughtless person would conclude that this was a special blessing from the Lord. Such would reason, "Such generosity could not be

mere coincidence." Now Abraham can have even more than he asked, and that without cost. Is that not how a person of the world would reason? How would

YOU think about such an arrangement being offered to you? What value would you place on such an advantage?

Oh, there is a marvelous thing to be learned by this whole incident. Let us consider Abraham's response.

I WILL GIVE MONEY FOR THE FIELD

"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. 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. 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."

My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:8-10).

The saints of God must take care not to fall into the habit of speaking derogatorily of men. It is said of the great archangel Michael, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not [did not dare] bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 1:9). Peter elaborated on this, pointing out that a time of spiritual deterioration would come when men would not be afraid to speak evil of spiritual dignities – even those who are wicked. "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise

is a "defaming charge," ^{AMPLIFIED} "slandorous judgment," ^{NRSV} "violent language," ^{BBE} or "insulting charge." ^{CJB}

Without spending an inordinate amount of time on this matter, it is enough to say that faith does not produce anarchists, rebels, blasphemers, contentious men. It does not move men to become name-callers, and those who pass eternal judgment on those who are made in the image of God. The reason for this is quite apparent. **Men can respect dignities because their power comes from God.** As it is written, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. **For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God"** (Rom 13:1). Men like Pharaoh, Sihon, Og, Sennacherib, etc, may abuse that power. However, such men are serving a purpose in their capacity, and it is intended to ultimately accrue to the glory of God. The righteous are not required to approve of everything such men do. However, they are required to "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. [and] Honor the king" (1 Pet 2:17). No believer is excluded from these solemn obligations.

The saints of God must take care not to fall into the habit of speaking derogatorily of men.

MUTUAL RESPECT

"And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land..."

There is a sense in which "all men" are to be held in honor and respect. Peter solemnly writes, "Honor all men" (1 Pet 2:17). There is a certain dignity that is to be held by all men. This is in view of the fact that mankind is the offspring of God. Thus James reasons, "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing.

government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord" (2 Pet 2:10-11).

If railing accusations are not to be cast at evil principalities and powers in heavenly places, who are not in the image of God, what can be said of despots in the world who do bear a Divine imagery?

Whatever may be said of wicked men, it must not be the hurling of epithets – name-calling and other similar derogatory speech. A "railing accusation"

Thus, Abraham sets the example for us in ascribing a certain dignity to Ephron the Hittite – even though he knew that his own progeny would some day initiate a military campaign against that nation, driving them from the land that had been promised to him.

Incidentally, you might remember that Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, was a "Hittite" (2 Sam 11:3).

I WILL GIVE THEE MONEY FOR THE FIELD

"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 refuses a gift of the land, and insists on paying for it: *"I will give thee money for the field."* This is the same posture he took toward the king of Sodom, who also offered him the booty he was returning his own conquests (Gen 14:21-23). Further, he intends to pay Ephron for the true value of the land. He does not seek a bargain, or make an attempt to procure it at a reduced price.

THE LAND IS WORTH FOUR HUNDRED SHEKELS OF SILVER

" . . . 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 will take no more for the land than it is worth. The value is stated to have been four hundred shekels of silver. At the current value of silver (\$10 an ounce), that would be equivalent to \$64,000).

ABRAHAM WEIGHED TO EPHRON THE SILVER

" . . . 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."

Other versions read, *"currency of the merchants,"* ^{NKJV} *"commercial standard,"* ^{NASB} *"the weight current among the merchants."* ^{NIV}

Thus, Abraham's transaction was in strict keeping with money standards and propriety. No swindling or deception was involved here, a practice that is quite common in our country.

A Picture of Redemption

Salvation involves redemption—i.e. the purchase of people. Thus it is written, *"For ye are bought with a price:*

therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor 6:20). This, however, was a purchase of another order. We are told that in those early times, the price of a slave was *"twenty pieces of silver"* (Gen 37:28), the selling price of Joseph, when his brothers sold him to some Midianite merchantmen (Gen 37:28).

But when it comes to the purchase of men, there was not enough gold or silver in the world to complete the transaction. Therefore Peter writes, *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain*

commandment of the Lord (Hos 1:2). But when she returned to harlotry, Hosea was required to purchase her, which he did for fifteen pieces of silver, and 1-1/2 homers of barley [about ten bushels ^{NIV}] (Hos 3:2).

So it was in God's relation to humanity. When He created Adam and Eve, there was no redemption, no purchasing, no price paid. However, after man had fallen, there had to be a purchase. Men could not simply return to God and, so to speak, start over. God would not, in fact, receive them into His house.

However, after man had fallen, there had to be a purchase. Men could not simply return to God and, so to speak, start over. God would not, in fact, receive them into His house.

*conversation received by tradition from your fathers; **But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:** Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,"* (1 Pet 1:20).

Unlike Abraham's transaction, this was not according to the world's merchandisers. This was a cost established by the God of heaven. And it was not for a portion of humanity, but for the entire offspring of Adam. **Further, the purchase obligated all men to God.** Even further, the purchase did not involve any negotiations with humanity itself. God purchased what He had created. Like the wandering harlot married to Hosea (Hos 3:1-5), humanity had willingly strayed from God, refusing to remain with Him.

As with Hosea's wife Gomer, men were not initially redeemed. Hosea did not purchase Gomer when he first took her from harlotry according to the

The price was established by God, and paid to God. It was not paid to the devil, as some foolish men allege. It was not paid to the devil because he did not own men. He manipulated them, but they did not belong to him. As God announced prior to the redemption, *"All souls are Mine"* (Ezek 18:4). However, this was a most unique purchase. It was not accomplished by simply passing some form of currency from one to another.

What Was Involved in the Purchase?

Mankind had to be returned to God in a usable state, and with no after-effects of sin upon him. This required the absolute removal of sin – taking away *"the sin of the world"* (John 1:29). This, however, was not a simplistic thing. Sin could not be spoken away, ignored, or the debt paid off by the works of the fallen ones. Because of the nature of God, sin had to be *"put away"* (Heb 9:26) by a *"man,"* since the fall of humanity came by a *"man"* (Rom 5:15-19; 1 Cor 15:21).

To further complicate things, sin must be “put away” by Divine judgment, or cursing – and it must all be put away at the same time. This meant all sin had to be gathered together, and deposited in a single place for judgment and condemnation. Of course, this was something that could not possibly be accomplished by men.

Thus, the Son of God enters into the picture. He must be willing to lay aside His glory to accomplish this assignment. He cannot do what is required of Him as God, but must do it as a Man. When He was yet God, and “in the form of God,” the Word, as He was then identified, consented to come to earth, lay down His life, and take it up again (Heb 10:5-10; John 10:17-18).

When in a humbled state, and

while He was pinioned on the cross, all of the sins of humanity were gathered together, and then God “laid on Him [Christ] the iniquity of us all” (Isa53:6).

Then, in an act of Divine judgment, the sword of the Lord was directed against His own Son, as Zechariah prophesied (Zech 13:7). God “condemned sin in the flesh” of His own Son (Rom 8:3). God “made Him to be sin” (2 Cor 5:21), then made Him “a curse for us” (Gal 3:13). It was God who “delivered” Jesus “up for us all” (Rom 8:32). It was God’s “determinate counsel and foreknowledge” that ultimately accounted for the death of Christ (Acts 2:23). When “both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel” gathered together against Christ, the early church confessed to God it was “to do whatsoever Thy hand and

Thy counsel determined before to be done” (Acts 4:28).

In order to attest that God had seen the travail of Christ’s soul, and be satisfied (Isa 53:11), God raised Him from the dead, declaring Him, to be “the Son of God with power” (Rom 1:4). Then, after spending forty days with His disciples “speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God” (Acts 1:3), He was “received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God” (Mk 16:19). It has been revealed that He entered heaven “by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Heb 12). All of this met the Divine requirements.

That is what it cost to redeem mankind! That is the price that was paid by the Lord Jesus Himself.

AND THE FIELD WAS MADE SURE TO ABRAHAM

“¹⁷ And the field of Ephron, which in the field, that were in all the borders

The things that have been vouchsafed to us in Christ are known to all those in heaven. God the Father, Christ Jesus the exalted Son, the Holy Spirit, the holy angels, the Seraphim, the Cherubim, the Living creatures – they are all privy to the arrangement and provision of the New Covenant.

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.”

THE SCOPE OF THE PROPERTY

“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

round about, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession . . .”

A significant amount of detail was involved in this transaction.

- ➔ The field.
- ➔ The cave that was in the field.
- ➔ All of the trees that were in the field.
- ➔ All of the trees “that were in the borders round about.”

All of this was firmly established, so that no one could lawfully take anything within the scope of the land for their own. It all, by confirming witness, belonged to Abraham.

An Application

For those who are in Christ Jesus, a plentitude of provisions have been procured, and now belong to them. They are classified as “all spiritual blessings” (Eph 1:3), and “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Pet 1:3).m They include “the whole armor of God” (Eph 6:10-18), and “the weapons of our warfare” (2 Cor 10:3-4). You will find grace, peace, might, and joy in these provisions (2 Pet 1:2; Eph 3:16; 1 Thess 1:5), together with access to God (Eph 3:12), and the gift of the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 4:8).

All of this has been fully documented in Scripture, and underwritten by God Himself. A Mediator has been established for their dispensing, and everyone who is in Christ has been apprized of the fact that these things belong to them. It simply is not right for any professing believer to

remain ignorant of them.

IT WAS KNOWN TO EVERYONE

“ . . . in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city.”

Everyone involved in the transaction was privy to it. None of the sons of Seth were the dark about this arrangement. It was a public matter.

An Application

The things that have been vouchsafed to us in Christ are known to all those in heaven. God the Father,

Christ Jesus the exalted Son, the Holy Spirit, the holy angels, the Seraphim, the Cherubim, the Living creatures – they are all privy to the arrangement and provision of the New Covenant. Angels have been appointed to minister to those who are *“the heirs of salvation”* (Heb 1:13-14). Even the devil knows enough about this to launch an initiate against those *“which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus”* (Rev 12:17).

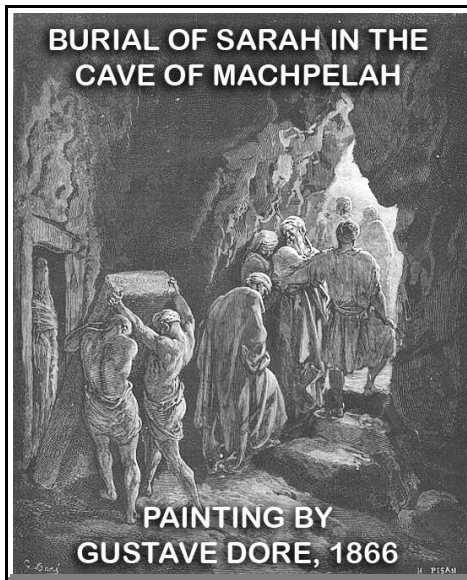
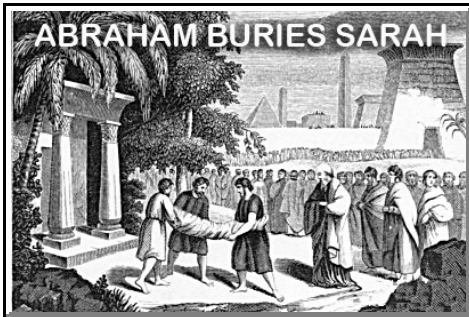
It appears that the only place these benefits are not known is among the sons of men – many of whom claim

they are related to God through Christ. The wrongness if this circumstance ought to evident to everyone.

Although it is glaringly present in the modern church, an ignorance of the things provided in Christ Jesus cannot be justified. The very existence of the situation testifies of the fundamental unfaithfulness that exists among the leaders of these religious groups without knowledge. It is a condition that will be duly addressed on the day of judgment. Then, the destiny of unfaithful servants will be made known.

ABRAHAM BURIED SARAH

“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.”



Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan. . . .”

The significance of the city of Hebron is found through the time of Nehemiah, and is mentioned 117 times during that period. This was a city of Judah, and was located south of Jerusalem. During the taking of Canaan, Caleb, one of the two faithful spies of Israel, defeated this city, taking it for his own (Josh 14:6-15; Josh 1:20). It was also one of cities of refuge that were established in Israel (Josh 20:7). It was also the city in which David was crowned king.

IT WAS MADE SURE TO ABRAHAM

SOME FACTS ABOUT HEBRON

The ancient city lay in a valley, and the two remaining pools, one of which at least existed in, the time of David, serve, with other circumstances, to identify the modern with the ancient site (Genesis 37:14; 2 Samuel 4:12). Much of the lifetime of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was spent in this neighborhood, where they were all entombed, and it was from hence that the patriarchal family departed for Egypt by the way of Beersheba (Genesis 37:14; 46:1). After the return of the Israelites, the city was taken by Joshua and given over to Caleb, who expelled the Anakim from its territories (Joshua 10:36, 37; 14:6-15; 15:13-14; Judges 1:20). It was afterwards made only of the cities of refuge, and assigned to the priests and Levites (Joshua 20:7; 21:11, 13). David, on becoming king of Judah, made Hebron his royal residence. Here he reigned seven years and a half, here most of his sons were born, and here he was anointed king over all Israel (1 Samuel 2:1-4, 11; 1 Kings 2:11; 2 Samuel 5:1,3). On this extension of his kingdom Hebron ceased to be sufficiently central, and Jerusalem then became the metropolis. From that point on, Jerusalem became the city of prominence.

FOR A POSSESSION OF A BURYINGPLACE

“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.”

Other versions read, *“were deeded over to Abraham,”* ^{NASB} *“passed from the Hittites to Abraham,”* ^{NRSV} *“were legally made over to Abraham,”* ^{NIB} and *“were conveyed to Abraham for a permanent*

THE SAME IS HEBRON

And after this, Abraham buried

At 127 years of age, Sarah died “in the land of Canaan,” and Abraham bought a piece of land in which to bury her. – Given O. Blakely

burial place.” AMPLIFIED

As already mentioned, this was the place where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their wives were buried – the only exception being Rachel, who was buried in Bethlehem as they were traveling.

The Standard of Burial

Even the Egyptians buried their dead, embalming the body in a sort of intuitive hope that the dead would live again. “The ancient Egyptians possessed a secret of embalming that is a marvel to this present day. Early historians indicate that the embalmers banded together as a guild, but Jacob’s body was prepared by physicians because he was not an Egyptian, and he would not be subjected to their native practices. Even the preparation of the body by physicians extended over a 40-day period (v. 3).” BELIEVER’S STUDY BIBLE

It ought to be noted that throughout Scripture, the standard for the handling of the dead is burial. Some significant references to burial include the following.

- ➔ Job, living about the time of Abraham, referred to the interment of the body in the earth when he spoke by faith of a resurrection: *“And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me”* (Job 19:27).
- ➔ Even the Egyptians buried their dead, embalming the body with a kind of intuitive sense that they would live again (Gen 50:22-3,26)
- ➔ The place purchased by Abraham was called *“a buryingplace”* (Gen 23:4,9,20).
- ➔ Jacob made Joseph swear he would bury him in his father’s *“buryingplace”* (Gen 47:30).
- ➔ It is written of Jacob, *“And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before*

Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace” (Gen 49:30)

- ➔ God *“buried”* Moses *“in a valley in the land of Moab”* (Deut 34:5-6).
- ➔ David was *“buried”* (Acts 2:29).
- ➔ John the Baptist body was *“buried”* by his disciples (Matt 14:11-12).
- ➔ The Jews had a *“manner”* of burying the dead (John 19:40).
- ➔ Jesus foretold His own burial (Matt 26:12; Mk 14:8; John 12:7).
- ➔ When Jesus died, *“the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and testified to many”* (Matt 27:52-53).
- ➔ Following His vicarious death, the body of Jesus was *“buried,”* which is part of the Gospel (1 Cor 15:4).
- ➔ The martyr Stephen was *“buried”* (Acts 8:2).
- ➔ Baptism is depicted as being *“buried”* with Christ (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12).
- ➔ Apostolic doctrine refers to burial as sowing the body in the hope of the resurrection from the dead (1 Cor 15:42-44).

What About Cremation?

The doctrine of Scripture is that the body does not belong to men – that it has been purchased by God. *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”* (1 Cor 6:19-20). Men are not at liberty to do what they will with the bodies, which belong to God.

Believers are particularly taught that the body will be redeemed. In fact

SOME NOTES ON CREMATION

1 – Cremation became the most common method of disposing of bodies by 800 BCE in Greece, and by 600 BCE in Rome. However, other societies had other methods: In ancient Israel, sepulchers (tombs or vaults) were used for burial; cremation was shunned. The body was exposed to the air of the tomb and simply decomposed over time, leaving only bones which were transferred to a bone box.

2 – The early Christian church also rejected cremation, partly because of its association with Pagan societies of Greece and Rome. Christians buried their dead in graves or in catacombs (underground vaults).

3 – In ancient Egypt, bodies were embalmed so that they would be preserved for the afterlife.

4 – In ancient China, they were buried.

5 – When Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, and the followers and leaders of other religions were either exiled or exterminated, burial became the only permitted method of disposing of bodies throughout much of Europe.

6 – The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America states: “Because the Orthodox Faith affirms the fundamental goodness of creation, it understands the body to be an integral part of the human person and the temple of the Holy Spirit, and expects the resurrection of the dead. The Church considers cremation to be the deliberate desecration and destruction of what God has made and ordained for us. The Church instead insists that the body be buried so that the natural physical process of decomposition may take place.”

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE
 -- <http://www.religioustolerance.org/crematio.htm>

it is referred to as becoming incorruptible and immortality at the resurrection of the dead, which is referred to as *“the redemption of the purchased possession”* (Eph 1:14) – *“the redemption of the body”* (Rom 8:23).

For those in Christ, burial is an act of faith. It is done in the prospect of the graves yielding up their dead in the resurrection. Jesus said of this, *“for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation”* (John 5:28-29).

Graves are for bodies. In fact, the conquering and final dissolution of death is described as a triumph over the victory of the grave. *“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be*

brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor

15:55).

Cremation simply does not blend well with either the recorded

experiences of the godly, or the doctrine of the apostles. Self-will is not sufficient justification for its practice.

CONCLUSION

Through the conclusion of the 23^d chapter, 239 "firsts" have been recorded. For your reference, they are listed below.

FIRST THINGS IN GENESIS

1. First mention of God (Gen 1:1)
2. First use of the word "created" (Gen 1:1)
3. First circumstance of chaos and disorder (Gen 1:2)
4. First mention of darkness" (Gen 1:2)
5. First mention of the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2)
6. First commandment (Gen 1:3)
7. First mention of "light" (Gen 1:3)
8. First none-heavenly orderliness (Gen 1:4-10)
9. First Separation (Gen 1:4,7)
10. First Day and night (Gen 1:5)
11. First mention of "evening" and "morning" (Gen 1:5)
12. First mention of "firmament" (Gen 1:6)
13. First use of the word "appear" (Gen 1:9)
14. First Terrestrial substance (Gen 1:10)
15. First Vegetation life (Gen 1:11-12)
16. First Celestial substance (Gen 1:16)
17. First sea-life (Gen 1:20-22)
18. First fowl (Gen 1:20)
19. First Animal life (Gen 1:24-25)
20. First language of plurality in the Godhead (Gen 1:26)
21. First Man (Gen 3:19)
22. First Warning (Gen 2:17)
23. First Display of human wisdom (Gen 2:19-20)
24. First Woman (Gen 2:21-22)
25. First Marriage (Gen 2:22-24)
26. First Exposure to Satan (Gen 3:1)
27. First Temptation (Gen 3:1-5)
28. First delusion (Gen 3:6)
29. First Sin (Gen 3:8)

30. First Knowledge of nakedness and its shame (Gen 3:7)
31. First Divine interrogation (Gen 3:9-13)
32. First Vicarious death (Gen 3:21)
33. First Divinely provided clothing (Gen 3:21)
34. First Promise (Gen 3:15)
35. First Curse among men (Gen 3:17)
36. First expulsion (Gen 3:23-24)
37. First Birth (Gen (Gen 4:1)
38. First Offering (Gen 4:3)
39. First accepted sacrifice (Gen 4:4)
40. First rejected sacrifice (Gen 4:5)
41. First human reaction to a rejected sacrifice (Gen 4:5)
42. First time a man became angry (Gen 4:5-6)
43. First Divine response to human anger (Gen 4:6-16)
44. First Murder (Gen 4:8)
45. First wanderer or vagabond (Gen 4:12)
46. First mark put on a man (Gen 4:15)
47. First man to go out from the presence of the Lord (Gen 4:16)
48. First city built (Gen 4:17)
49. First case of bigamy (Gen 4L19)
50. First instance of retaliation (Gen 4:23)
51. First human substitute (Gen 4:25)
52. First Calling on the name of the Lord (Gen 4:26)
53. First genealogy (Gen 5:1-32)
54. First person said to have walked with God (Gen 5:22)
55. First Translation into heaven – Enoch (Gen 5:24)
56. First unequal yoke (Gen 6:2)
57. First men of the Spirit striving with men (Gen 6:3)
58. First reference to a society of ruthless men (Gen 6:4)
59. First reference to man's thoughts being corrupt (Gen 6:4).
60. First reference to God repenting

- (Gen 6:6).
61. First reference to a universal judgment (Gen 6:2).
62. First reference to a person finding grace (Gen 6:).
63. First reference to a man who was just and perfect in his generation (Gen 6:9).
64. First reference to the total corruption of humanity (Gen 6:12).
65. First reference to "the end of all flesh" (Gen 6:13).
66. First Large building project (Gen 6:4-16).
67. First boat built (Gen 6:14-15).
68. First reference to a flood (Gen 6:17).
69. First Covenant made with a man (Gen 6:18).
70. First reference to someone being saved (Gen 6:18).
71. First reference to the gathering of animals (Gen 6:19-20).
72. First reference to the gathering and storage of food (Gen 6:21).
73. First reference to someone doing all that God had commanded (Gen 6:22).
74. The first person God affirmed He saw as "righteous" (Gen 7:1).
75. First Salvation of a family (Gen 7:1).
76. First record of someone being saved because of another (Gen 7:1).
77. First record of animals being saved (Gen 7:8).
78. First rain (Gen 7:12).
79. First and only universal flood (Gen 7:18-20).
80. First opening of the fountains in the earth (Gen 7:2,11).
81. First opening of the windows of heaven (Gen 7:11).
82. First global curse (Gen 7:21-23).
83. First destruction of every living

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| <p>substance (Gen 7:23).</p> <p>84. First time God is said to have remembered someone (Gen 8:1).</p> <p>85. First record of a drying wind (Gen 8:1).</p> <p>86. First confirmation of newness of life following a curse (Gen 8:11).</p> <p>87. First record of a deliverance (Gen 8:18-19)</p> <p>88. First building of an altar (Gen 8:20).</p> <p>89. First known sacrificial offering of multiple creatures (8:20).</p> <p>90. First time God is said to have been pleased with an offering (Gen 8:21).</p> <p>91. First promise of continued seedtime/harvest, summer/winter, day/night (Gen 8:22).</p> <p>92. First Deliverance from the world (Gen 8:18).</p> <p>93. First New beginning (Gen 9:21-22).</p> <p>94. The first mention of animals fearing mankind (Gen 9:2).</p> <p>95. The first addition to the human diet (Gen 9:3).</p> <p>96. The first approval of eating meat (Gen 9:3-4).</p> <p>97. The first prohibition of eating blood (Gen 9:4).</p> <p>98. The first authorization of capital punishment (Gen 9:5-6).</p> <p>99. The first covenant established with the seed of a principle person (Gen 9:9).</p> <p>100. The first covenant with living creatures (Gen 9:10).</p> <p>101. The first promise to never again cut off all living beings with a flood (Gen 9:11).</p> <p>102. The first token of a covenant (Gen 9:12).</p> <p>103. The first reference fo a rainbow (Gen 9:13-17).</p> <p>104. The first reference to God remembering a covenant He made (Gen 9:15-16).</p> <p>105. The first reference to a husbandman (Gen 9:20).</p> <p>106. The first reference to a vineyard (Gen 9:20).</p> <p>107. The first reference to wine (Gen 9:21).</p> <p>108. The first reference to a person becoming drunk (Gen 9:21).</p> <p>109. The first curse uttered by a man (Gen 9:25).</p> | <p>110. The first blessing uttered by a man (Gen 9:26).</p> <p>111. The first reference to a servant (Gen 9:25-26).</p> <p>112. The first reference to the enlargement of one’s territory (Gen 9:27).</p> <p>113. The first mention of the “Gentiles” (10:5).</p> <p>114. The first mention of “nations” (10:5).</p> <p>115. The first mention of “families,” tribes, or classes of people (10:5,1820,31,32).</p> <p>116. The first mention of “isles,” or maritime countries (10:5).</p> <p>117. First mention of a hunter (Gen 10:9).</p> <p>118. First mention of a kingdom (10:10).</p> <p>119. First mention of Babel (Gen 10:10).</p> <p>120. First mention of Nineveh (Gen 10:-12).</p> <p>121. First mention of Canaanites (Gen 10:18).</p> <p>122. First mention of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 10:19).</p> <p>123. First mention of “tongues,” or languages (Gen 10:5,20,31).</p> <p>124. The first mention of different nations “divided in the earth” (Gen 10:32).</p> <p>125. The first mention of a group of people traveling (Gen 11:2).</p> <p>126. The first example of agreement among men (Gen 11:3).</p> <p>127. The first mention of “brick” (11:3).</p> <p>128. The first mention of “mortar” (Gal 11:3).</p> <p>129. The first mention of the tempering of brick (11:3)</p> <p>130. The first mention of a “tower” (11:4).</p> <p>131. The first mention of a fear of being “scattered” (11:4).</p> <p>132. The first mention of the Lord coming “down” (11:5).</p> <p>133. The first mention of human potential (11:6).</p> <p>134. The first record of God’s assessment of a collective work (11:5-6).</p> <p>135. The first record of God’s response to a collective work (11:6-7).</p> <p>136. The first record of God</p> | <p>scattering a people (11:8).</p> <p>137. First Judgment of a human project (11:8).</p> <p>138. First Dispersion of humanity (11:8).</p> <p>139. First record of a son dying before his father (11:28).</p> <p>140. The first barren woman (11:30).</p> <p>141. The first mention of the land of Canaan (Gen 11:31).</p> <p>142. First Calling from one place to another (Gen 12:1)</p> <p>143. First Divine direction concerning a move (Gen 12:1)</p> <p>144. First Covenant of blessing (Gen 12:2-3)</p> <p>145. First mention of a Divinely created nation (Gen 12:2)</p> <p>146. First mention of acquired wealth (Gen 12:5)</p> <p>147. First mention of servants, or slaves (Gen 12:5)</p> <p>148. The first time God is said to have “appeared” to anyone (Gen 12:7).</p> <p>149. First Famine (Gen 12:10)</p> <p>150. First trip from Canaan to Egypt (Gen 12:10)</p> <p>151. First person to treat another person well for the sake of another person (Gen 12:18)</p> <p>152. First example of God cursing those who cursed Abram (Gen 12:17)</p> <p>153. First examples of plagues coming from the Lord (Gen 12:17)</p> <p>154. First trip from Egypt to Canaan (Gen 12:20-13:3)</p> <p>155. First man mentioned who was rich: Abram (Gen 13:2)</p> <p>156. The first example of a territory being unable to sustain those in it (Gen 13:6)</p> <p>157. The first example of a dispute among employees (Gen 13:7)</p> <p>158. The first separation of kindred spirits (Gen 13:8-12)</p> <p>159. The first commanded perusal of the land of Canaan (Gen 13:17)</p> <p>160. First use of the word “Hebrew” (Gen 14:13)</p> <p>161. The first military initiative by a man of faith (Gen 14:14-15)</p> <p>162. The first mention of Melchizedek (Gen 14:18a)</p> <p>163. The first mention of a “priest of the most High God” (Gen</p> |
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| <p>14:18b)</p> <p>164. The first mention of a king who was also a priest (Gen 14:18)</p> <p>165. The first mention of “bread and wine” (Gen 14:18)</p> <p>166. The first mention of enemies being delivered into ones hand by the Lord (Gen 14:20a)</p> <p>167. The first mention of “tithes” (Gen 14:20b)</p> <p>168. First Vision (Gen 15:1).</p> <p>169. First record of the words “Fear not” (Gen 15:1)</p> <p>170. First revelation of God in a protective capacity (Gen 15:1).</p> <p>171. The first reference to God as a “Reward” (Gen 15:1).</p> <p>172. First reference to someone believing God (Gen 15:6).</p> <p>173. First mention of righteousness (Gen 15:6).</p> <p>174. First mention of man inheriting something (Gen 15:7).</p> <p>175. First prophecy of a being judged (Gen 15:14).</p> <p>176. First reference to iniquity being “full” (Gen 15:16).</p> <p>177. First use of the word “handmaid” (Gen 16:1).</p> <p>178. First mention of “Hagar” (Gen 16:1).</p> <p>179. First mention of God restraining a woman from bearing children (Gen 16:2).</p> <p>180. First time a wife’s handmaid bore children to her for her husband (Gen 16:4).</p> <p>181. First mention of an angel (Gen 16:7).</p> <p>182. First mention of “the angel of the Lord” (Gen 16:7),</p> <p>183. First message delivered by an angel (Gen 16:8-12).</p> <p>184. First time a name was given to a child according to revelation (Gen 16:11).</p> <p>185. First time someone gave a name to God (Gen 16:13).</p> <p>186. First time “Almighty” is mentioned (Gen 17:1).</p> <p>187. First time God is expressly said to have “talked” extensively with someone (Gen 17:3-22).</p> <p>188. First time a person was told he would be the father of “many nations” (Gen 17:4-5).</p> <p>189. First time someone was told “kings” would come out of him</p> | <p>(Gen 17:6).</p> <p>190. First time Abraham was told Sarah would bear the heir (Gen 17:19,21).</p> <p>191. First time “circumcision” is mentioned (Gen 17:10-13).</p> <p>192. First mention of “Isaac” (Gen 17:19).</p> <p>193. First time circumcision was performed (Gen 17:23-27).</p> <p>194. First example of more than one heavenly messenger appearing at a time (Gen 18:2).</p> <p>195. First example of hospitality (Gen18:4-8).</p> <p>196. First example of entertaining angels unawares (Gen 18:2).</p> <p>197. First reference to a godly man commanding his children and household (Gen 18:19).</p> <p>198. First example of intercession (Gen 18:23-32).</p> <p>199. First mention of mocking (Gen 19:14).</p> <p>200. First record of angels being sent to destroy cities (19:19-38).</p> <p>201. First record of the sin of sodomy (19:5).</p> <p>202. First record of someone being struck blind (19:11).</p> <p>203. First record of someone being cursed for looking back (19:26).</p> <p>204. First record of a heathen reasoning with God (20:4-5).</p> <p>205. First use of the word “prophet” (20:7).</p> <p>206. First reference to a husband being a “covering” for the wife (20:16).</p> <p>207. First reference to a person being “reproved” (20:16).</p> <p>208. First time the word prayer is mentioned in any of its varied forms “prayed” – pray, prays, prayer, prayed, prayers, prayeth (Gen 20:16).</p> <p>209. First reference to healing (20:17).</p> <p>210. First reference to God closing the wombs of an entire household (20:18).</p> <p>211. First miraculous birth (Gen 21:1).</p> <p>212. First mention of an eight-day-old child being circumcised (Gen 21:4).</p> <p>213. First mention of a child being “weaned” (Gen 21:8).</p> | <p>214. First mention of someone being cast out of the house (Gen 21:10).</p> <p>215. First mention of Beersheba (Gen 21:14).</p> <p>216. First mention of God opening someone’s eyes (Gen 21:19).</p> <p>217. First mention of an “archer” (Gen 21:20).</p> <p>218. First mention of “the wilderness of Paran” (Gen 21:21).</p> <p>219. First mention of a wife being “taken” for someone else (Gen 21:21).</p> <p>220. First mention of Philchol, Abimelech’s captain (Gen 21:22).</p> <p>221. First mention of swearing, s in taking an oath (Gen 21:23).</p> <p>222. First example of a covenant being made between two men (Gen 21:27).</p> <p>223. First mention of a person planting a grove (Gen 21:33).</p> <p>224. First mention of “Everlasting God” (Gen 21:33).</p> <p>225. First reference to someone being “tried, “tested,” “tempted,” or “proved” by God (Gen 22:1).</p> <p>226. First mention of a “burnt offering” (Gen 22:2).</p> <p>227. First time the word “Moriah” is mentioned (Gen 22:2).</p> <p>228. First time the word “worship” occurs (Gen 22:5)</p> <p>229. First record of an angel stopping a person from doing something (Gen 22:11).</p> <p>230. First record of a substitutionary offering (Gen 22:13).</p> <p>231. First use of the expression “the mount of the Lord” (Gen 22:14).</p> <p>232. First time the age of a woman at death is mentioned (Gen 23:1-2).</p> <p>233. First mention of “Kirjatharaba” (Gen 23:2).</p> <p>234. First record of a man’s wife dying (Gen 23:1-2).</p> <p>235. First mention of a “sepulcher” (Gen 23:6).</p> <p>236. First record of a burial (Gen 23:19).</p> <p>237. First mention of something that was purchased (Gen 23:9-16).</p> <p>238. First mention of a “burying</p> |
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239. place” (Gen 23:9).
First mention of the “worth” of

something (Gen 23:9,15).

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 6/15/12. We will continue our series of lessons in the book of Genesis. The thirty-fifth lesson will cover verses 1 through 21 of chapter twenty-four: “A WIFE FOR ISAAC, #1.” When Abraham was “old and well stricken in age,” having been blessed by the Lord in all things, he called for his eldest servant. He made him swear by the Lord that he would not take a wife for Isaac from the Canaanites, among whom he was living. He was to go to Abraham’s country, to his kindred, and take a wife for his son Isaac. The meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

2012 Refreshing Waters Renewal, #24

**July 31, August 2, 2012
Diamond Grove Christian Church
Diamond Grove, Missouri**

Theme: THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

An exposition of the reality of, and purpose for, the Exaltation of Christ. The implications of this exaltation will also be affirmed with Gospel power.

PARTICIPATING BROTHERS AND SISTERS

A DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES DURING OUR GATHERINGS

“Openings and Introductions” = 7-10 minute exposition of truth to promote spiritual focus; “Lead Singing” – AM Songs selected by Leader, PM Songs Lead favorites by the brethren; “Calling” = 7-10 minute exposition of truth designed to provoke disciplined thought; “Sermon” = 45 minute exposition of the things of God as revealed in Scripture; “Exhortation” = 5-8 minute challenge to act upon the truth we have heard; “Table Meditation” = 8-12 minute exposition of matters relating to Christ’s role in salvation; “Lead Scripture shower” = Leading of the quoting/reading of Scripture without comment; “Lead prayer session” = Presentation of three matters for prayer that are taken from the Word of God; “Lead Intercessory Prayer” = A time of focused prayers for personal needs; “Closing Scripture/Benediction” – Closing of the AM Gathering

SPEAKING/LEADING/MINISTERING IN THE ASSEMBLY

The Word of Truth Fellowship, Joplin, MO
DURING MAY, 2012

1. *Blakely, Eva* (Lead AM Singing, Lead AM Singing).
2. *Blakely, Given O.* (Teach AM Class, Teach AM Class, PM Sermon, PM Sermon).
3. *Blakely, Jonathan* (AM Table Meditation, PM Sermon).
4. *Blakely, June* (Lead PM Prayer Session, Lead PM Singing).
5. *Blakely, Mattie* (Lead Scripture Shower. AM Introduction, Lead PM Singing).
6. *Blakely, Michael* (AM Table Meditation, Teach AM Class, PM Table Meditation, PM Exhortation).
7. *Blakely, Michele* (Play Piano,).
8. *Blakely, Paul* (PM Introduction).
9. *Cobb, Anita* (Lead Scripture Shower).
10. *Cobb, Matthew* (AM Sermon).
11. *Cobb, Nicole* (AM Calling).
12. *Cobb, Robert* (AM Sermon, AM Opening Word, PM Exhortation, PM Exhortation, PM Table Meditation).
13. *Hutchcraft, Aaron* (AM Table Meditation, AM Opening Word, PM Table Meditation, PM Exhortation, PM Table Meditation).
14. *Hutchcraft, Barbara* (AM Opening Word, Lead PM Singing, PM Introduction).
15. *Hutchcraft, Debbie* (Lead AM Singing).
16. *Hutchcraft, Gene* (Lead PM Intercessory Prayer, AM Exhortation. AM Sermon, AM Table Meditation, PM Exhortation).
17. *Hutchcraft, Judah* (Read PM Sermon Text, Introduction to PM Sermon, PM Piano Solo).
18. *Hutchcraft, Silas* (Closing Scripture, Meditation, Closing Scripture/Benediction).
19. *Murphy, Mariah* (PLAY Lord’S Table Interlude).
20. *Parker, Melissa* (Lead Scripture Shower, AM Calling, Lead AM Singing).
21. *Parker, Tony* (AM Opening Word, AM Calling).
22. *Sims, Annie* (Read Am Sermon Text, Lead PM Singing).
23. *Sims, Baylie* (Read AM Sermon Text, Read PM Sermon Text, Read PM Sermon Text).
24. *Sims, Ricky* (Teach AM Class, AM Exhortation, AM Sermon).
25. *Sims, Tasha* (AM Calling).
26. *Williams, Jeremy* (AM Exhortation, PM Sermon).
27. *Williams, Levi* (Closing Scripture/Benediction).
28. *Williams, Logan* (Play AM/PM Lord’s Table Interlude, Read AM Sermon Text, Lead Scripture Shower, Read Am Sermon Text).
29. *Williams, Nichole* (PM Introduction).
30. *Williams, Sydney* (Closing Scripture/Benediction, Read PM Sermon Text).
31. *Preparing Lord’s Supper* (Various sisters).