

# THE SACRIFICE OF THE SON

## GENESIS 22

Concerning the events of Genesis 22, we are plainly told that the account is not only literal history, but also figurative or parabolic. In other words, Abraham was a real man in a real situation. But he was also a man acting out a parable of the Gospel—

**Heb 11:17** By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.

**Heb 11:18** Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

**Heb 11:19** Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

By allowing the Bible to become its own expositor, the above reference defines the general *figure* or *parable* of Genesis 22. (The word “figure” is trans. elsewhere as “parable”). We have a father who offers up, in sacrifice, his “only begotten son” only to receive him “from the dead” in what the apostle styles “a figure.”

### THE PARABLE

ABRAHAM—represents Yahweh, the Father

ISAAC—represents the Lord Jesus Christ

RAM—represents the sacrifice of the Son of God

*Elpis Israel*, pg. 255-261, where Bro. Thomas styles this section the PARABLE OF THE SEED.

“A parable is the setting forth of a certain thing as a representative of something else. Hence, it is a comparison, or similitude. It may be spoken, or acted. In the former case, fiction is used to illustrate that which is real; while in the latter, real actions on a small scale are representative of remoter and grander events. Whether spoken or acted, parables are dark and unintelligible to those who are not skilled in the things of the kingdom; but when once they come to know these, the things they resemble immediately appear. To allegorize is to represent truth by comparison. For certain features of the kingdom to be illustrated parabolically is to speak, or act, allegorically; and is a mode of instruction more calculated to keep up the attention, and to impress the mind permanently, than a set discourse, or formal disquisition. The scriptures are constructed after this ingenious plan, by which they are made so much more interesting, and capable of containing so much more matter, than any other book on the same subject, and of the same size. They are a study of themselves; and no ‘rules of interpretation,’ or of ‘logic,’ are of any value to the understanding of the things which they reveal. A parable was enacted by Abraham in offering up Isaac. The things transacted were real, but they were also parabolic, or figurative, or something else, even of the sacrifice and resurrection of the Seed, or Christ. After the death of Isaac, and when Jacob was waxing old, Joseph was selected from among his sons by the arrangements of God to be the typical representative of the future Seed, through whom the promises were to take effect. Hence, the life of Joseph became a living parable by which was represented to Jacob and his sons, and to believers afterwards, what was to be transacted in the life of Christ. In itself the story of Joseph is an interesting and moving history; but when we read it as though we were reading of Christ instead of him, the narration assumes an importance which highly commends itself to the student of the Word.” *John Thomas, 1849 (Elpis Israel, pg. 274-275)*

*Bro. H.P. Mansfield*, calls the event the starting point for “a new series in the allegory of Abraham’s life”—*Expositor*, pg. 258. By this, Bro. Mansfield implies that the literal events in Abraham’s life make up a chronological allegory in the development of the Gospel; from Genesis 22-25—

1—Sacrifice on Mt. Moriah: Christ’s death and resurrection (Ch. 22).

2—Death of Sarah, buried among Gentiles: Overthrow of Jerusalem’s polity A.D. 70 (Ch. 23).

3—Seeking a wife for Isaac: preaching the Truth in Gentile lands (Ch. 24).

4—Sons of the concubines: Abraham becomes typically a “father of many nations” foreshadowing the future (Ch. 25).

“Thus the allegory sets forth in proper sequence events that developed out of the offering of the Lord on Calvary’s hill”—*Expositor*, pg. 259

The section begins with Genesis 21, where we have the “allegory” of the Abrahamic seed—natural and spiritual.

**Gen 22:1** And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

It must be clarified that God “tempts” no one as it relates to moving a person to commit sin—

“James 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man”—**Jam. 1:13**.

The word “tempt” is translated “prove,” as in Exo. 15:25; 16:4, and other verses. While God does not “tempt” His servants in the sense mentioned above, He does “prove” them to know what is in their hearts and minds; by various means (Deu. 8:2-6; Jud. 3:1-4; 2Chr. 32:27-32; 24:1-2, 15-22; Deu. 13:3; 1Cor. 11:18-19).

**Gen 22:2** And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

“Thine only son” is represented by the phrase “only begotten son” in Heb. 11:17-19. This phrase is only used elsewhere to describe the Lord Jesus Christ as the “only begotten” son of the Father. Thus, Abraham and Isaac’s relationship is an enacted “parable” of Yahweh and the Lord Jesus Christ; the Father and Son. Notice the language; it is all in the context of what the Father has done in benefit of His creation—

**1 John 4:9** In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

**John 1:14-18** And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth...of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

**John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Furthermore, the fact that Isaac is called Abraham's "only begotten son" means that Ishmael was not regarded as the patriarch's true son. Why? Because Isaac, like all of God's sons, was begotten by the Word (see: notes Gen. 21:1-2 cf. 1Pet. 1:23; Jam. 1:18).

"The comment, *thine only son Isaac*, suggests that he was walking in the footsteps of his father, and implies that he was of responsible age, certainly in teenage years or later"—*Expositor*, pg. 259

Abraham offered Isaac with the confidence—faith—that "God was able to raise him, even from the dead" (Heb. 11:15-17). Again, this language is only used elsewhere to describe the resurrection of the Lord (Acts 2:24; 3:15; 4:10; Rom. 6:4, 9; Gal. 1:1; 2Cor. 4:4).

## **MORIAH—**

The site of this figurative sacrifice is most incredible, "the land of Moriah." The name of this place only appears one other place in Scripture—

**2 Chr 3:1** Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

Significantly, the place where Solomon, *the son of David*, built the Temple is the same location where David offered a personal sacrifice to stay the plague of death upon his people. The two episodes are typical of the Lord's first and second advents—2Sam. 24:1-25

"Moriah was itself a mountain upon which Solomon afterwards built the temple (2Chr. 3:1); and the land, or region, around, is celebrated by the mounts, afterwards called Zion, Olivet and Calvary. The mountain chosen of God is not named; I can only therefore express my opinion that it was Calvary"—*Elpis Israel*, pg. 257

It was, in fact, the sacrifice of the Lord at his first advent that provided the foundation of the spiritual temple (Eph. 2:19-22; 1Cor. 3:11-16).

How significant that the Gospel of the Kingdom is based upon two covenants—one with Abraham, and the other with David—and both of these men had a special "son" that typified Christ in his first and second advents!

The sacrifice, we are told six times in the chapter, was to be offered up as a "burnt offering" (Gen. 22:2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 13). Six, being the number of the flesh (Gen. 1:26-31; Rev. 13:18), was conquered by the perfect obedience of the Lord; represented in the "burnt offering."

There are some essential things required for a proper "burnt offering"—all typical of the Lord's sacrifice—

**Lev 1:3** If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD.

FIRST: It must be voluntary.

This signifies the willing sacrifice of the Lord, in perfect obedience to his Father's commandments. John 10:17-18; Phi. 2:5-8.

SECOND: It had to be without blemish.

This represents the character of the Lord Jesus Christ, without sin. Heb. 9:14, 28; 1Pet. 1:18-20

THIRD: It was a whole dedication or offering.

This represents the total obedience and complete sacrifice of the Lord; the heart, soul, mind and strength.

**Mark 12:33** And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

**Gen 22:3** And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

The unnamed "two young men," we suggest, represent two disciples of the Lord. These two servants are mentioned here in verse 3, as going with the Father and Son to the sacrifice; again in verse 5, when being assured by Abraham that both Father and Son would return to them; and finally in verse 19, after the action is completed.

In a parabolic sense, these two young men witness the figurative death and resurrection of the Lord. Accordingly, they seem to represent Peter and John—John 18:15-16; John 20:1-6

**John 18:15-16** And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple (John): that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

**John 20:1-3** The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved (John), and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

With the New Testament record providing the anti-type to the Old Testament, we note the remarkable language of the next verse—

**Gen 22:4** Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

The record is completely silent between verses three and four. In other words, when Gen. 22:4 states "on the third day," we have nothing recorded between Abraham's journey (verse 3) and the arrival in the region of Moriah (verse 4). Appropriately, this represents the three days of silence when the Lord was in the grave.

**Mat 12:40** For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

“He was in the tomb three days and three nights, answering to the time of this journey. As far as Abraham was concerned, during the whole journey Isaac was as good as dead for three days”—*Expositor*, pg. 260

**Gen 22:5** And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

“This is evidence of Abraham’s faith and understanding of the promises given to him. He knew that Isaac must be restored to him, after he had been put to death, and therefore he confidently told the young men that the two of them would return (Heb. 11:17-19)—*Expositor*, pg. 260

Accepting our suggestion that the two “young men” represent Peter and John, it is quite significant they are told to “abide ye here with the ass,” because the Father and Son would “come again to you.” The “ass” is a symbol of Israel (Zec. 9:9; Jer. 2:24; Exo. 13:13; Jud. 5:9-10; 10:3-4; 12:13-14; Exo. 15:1; Jer. 51:21). Interestingly, it is Peter and John who at the forefront, expounding the meaning of Christ’s death and resurrection to Israel, and subsequent entrance into the Temple, and healing of the lame man...etc. (Acts 3:1-11; 4:13-19; 8:14).

**Gen 22:6** And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

As Abraham laid the wood of the burnt offering upon Isaac, so the Lord Jesus Christ carried his own cross to the hill of his crucifixion; a representation of his human nature (see: Dictionary)—

**1 Pet 2:24** Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

**John 19:17** And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

“How completely agreeable the type is to the antitype... (“and they went both of them together”) Again the type beautifully foreshadows the offering of Christ; for that also was a cooperative work between the Father and the Son. Christ told the apostles that the Father would be with him in his offering”—*Expositor*, pg. 261

**John 16:32** Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

Jesus carrying his own cross was a symbol of what he did during the days of his flesh; struggled and overcame the nature he shared with those he came to save or redeem. In final triumph, the Lord impaled the flesh to the cross, an action of total obedience (Phi. 2:5-9). The fact that Abraham went with Isaac, shows that the Son was strengthened by the Father to overcome sin (see: Atonement notes)

**Gen 22:7** And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

**Gen 22:8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.**

It is so easy for us to forget the fundamental principles of the atonement. Abraham states that “God will provide HIMSELF a lamb for a burnt offering.” Salvation is BY God and FOR God. Although we should never minimize what the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished in sharing our nature, yet overcoming the flesh, we must equally never overlook that fact that Jesus received his strength from the Father. Thus, appropriate for the type and antitype, the chapter under consideration emphasizes the wonderful work of the father; Abraham, who represents Yahweh. Accompanying this principle, we also find the willing spirit of the son, Isaac.

**Isa. 63:5** says God’s “own arm brought salvation *unto him.*”

**Eph. 1:5** says God has embraced us as children by adoption “by Jesus Christ *unto himself.*”

**Isa. 59:16** says God provided an intercessor and “his arm brought salvation *unto him.*”

**Psa. 80:17** says God empowered Christ; “whom thou madest strong *for thyself.*”

**2 Cor 5:19** says “God was in Christ, reconciling the world *unto himself*”

*Brother John Thomas*—“Men were not ushered into being for the purpose of being saved or lost! God-manifestation, not human salvation, was the grand purpose of the Eternal Spirit. The salvation of a multitude is incidental to the manifestation, but it was not the end proposed. The Eternal Spirit intended to enthrone Himself on the earth, and in so doing, to develop a Divine Family from among men, every one of whom shall be Spirit because born of the Spirit; and that this family shall be large enough to fill the earth, when perfected, to the entire exclusion of flesh and blood.” *Herald of the Kingdom, April 1856.*

*Brother Robert Roberts*—“The death of Christ has more to do with the exaltation of God, than the salvation of man. Most men take in the latter more easily than the former, and quickly get astray through the power of mere humanitarianism.”—*Diary of a Voyage, pg. 70*

Like the Lord Jesus Christ, we benefit greatly from God’s plan of salvation *for Himself.* However, we cannot overlook the plan and purpose of God: “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea”—Isa. 11:9 (Num. 14:21; Hab. 2:14; Zec. 14:9). The Creator has never been deterred from His original purpose; to “create man in his own image” (Gen. 1:27).

Genesis 22:8 states: “God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering.” This compares to the statement by the apostle—“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Christ took away sin by means of the antitypical burnt offering; that is, perfect obedience (Phi. 2:5-11; John 10:18).

“How true these words are! Only God could provide a lamb of such a nature as to atone for the sins of humanity”—*Expositor, pg. 261*

**Gen 22:9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.**

“Isaac must have realized the purpose of the journey, yet the narrative does not record any resistance on his part...In doing so, Isaac typified the willing obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ to the express will of his Father”—Expositor, *pg. 262*  
John 12:27; Isa. 53:7

**John 10:17-18** Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

**Gen 22:10** And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

While it is true that Christ was slain by evil Jews and Gentiles, like Abraham and Isaac, it was by his Father’s design; thus “Abraham stretched forth his hand!”

**Acts 2:22-23** Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

As with Isaac, the suffering and subsequent exaltation of many others in scripture are typical or figurative of God’s plan and purpose of salvation through His son.

**Gen 22:11** And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

**Gen 22:12** And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

As noted above, God did not personally lay His own hand upon His son, just as Abraham withheld from slaying Isaac.

**Verse 8** says that Abraham “bound” Isaac for this sacrifice. Thus, the pronouncement of the angel is symbolic of the Lord’s release from the ‘bonds’ of death.

**Acts 2:24** Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

“His son was saved ‘out of death’ by the offering he made (Heb. 5:7), which dramatized the fact that Christ also would be saved through his own offering (Heb. 13:20)”—  
*Expositor, pg. 263*

**Gen 22:13** And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

“This ram was caught in a thicket by his horns, typically representing the Lamb of God as helplessly caught in the redemptive work of mankind. Both Isaac and the ram represent Christ. Conjointly they show the Lord as saved by his own sacrifice (Heb. 13:20)...Both Isaac and the ram represent Christ in different aspects, and the obvious teaching that Christ was saved by his own offering (see: Phi. 2:8-9; Heb. 5:7; 9:12—RV). Christ

offered himself as representative of those he came to save and not in the place of them”—  
*Expositor, pg. 263*

**Heb 5:7-8** Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered

**Phil 2:6-11** Who, being in the form of God, thought equality with God a thing not to be grasped: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Sharing our nature, the Lord Jesus Christ never succumbed to the flesh. Thus, he condemned ‘sin in the flesh’ and was exalted by the Father.

**Rom 8:3** For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

**Heb 4:15** For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

**Gen 22:14** And Abraham called the name of that place **Yahweh-Yireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.**

The public display of the Lord’s sacrifice was intended to be ‘seen’ by all men, in order to set forth the principles of atonement to all the world.

**John 12:31-32** Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

**Acts 26:26** For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.

## **NEW SECTION**

**Gen 22:15** And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

“All that the angel had said on the first occasion (vv. 11-13) was fulfilled at the first advent of the Lord; all that he proclaimed on this the second occasion will be fulfilled at Christ’s second coming”—*Expositor, pg. 264*

In accordance with the well-stated quote above, Genesis 22 can be divided into two parts: verses 1-14, which represent the first advent of the Lord; and verses 15-19, which represent the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Gen 22:16** And said, **By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:**



**Gen 22:17** That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

The apostle Paul comments on these verses extensively in his epistle to the Hebrews.

**Heb 6:13-20** For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

God's "promise" to Abraham was confirmed by His personal "oath," which cannot be altered ("immutable") see: Psa. 105:8-11. The latter—the oath—makes the former—the promise—irrevocable. This means that God has associated His name and existence, as an "oath," to guarantee that Abraham's covenant would be fulfilled (see: Deu. 7:8; Jer. 11:5; Luke 1:73).

A close reading of the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 12:1-3 will prove that God's promise was conditional. Now, because of Abraham's deep display of faith and works—obedience—the confirmation of the promise is unconditional.

We wonder if this is the very chapter to which the Lord referred—"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56).

Why is Abraham's seed styled "stars" upon the second angelic call from heaven?

**Dan 12:1-3** And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

"Before we dismiss the parable of the Seed, it is to be remarked, that it was not completed in the figurative resurrection of Isaac. The sacrificial death and resurrection of Christ had been represented; but then, after these events, what was to be his destiny? The answer to this question is found in the closing incident of the parable. Moses testifies that 'the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven *the second time*.' The first time announced from heaven the acceptance of the son's sacrifice; but the second time the Lord spoke from heaven had reference to Christ's triumph over his enemies, and his possession of the world, as preached to Abraham in the gospel at the beginning."—*Elpis Israel*, pg. 258

**Gen 22:18** And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Notice carefully the outstanding summary below—

“This (verse) is cited by Peter in Acts 3:25, and by Paul in Gal. 3:8. Peter quoted it to show that it was the divine purpose that the Gospel should be proclaimed to all peoples, but *first to the Jews*; Paul quoted it to show *that Gentiles* were to be incorporated into the divine purpose”—*Expositor*, pg. 265

The above statement is most enlightening, because it shows that the sacrifice of Christ was to provide atonement for both Jew and Gentile, through the Abrahamic Covenant.

**Isa 49:1-6** Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God. And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

**Acts 13:46-49** Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

**Gen 22:19** So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

Beer-sheba means *Well Of The Oath*. This is an appropriate location to emphasize the historic parable before us (previous class notes: Gen. 21:14-19).

#### FINAL THOUGHT

**John 8:56-58** Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

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#### CHAPTER ADDENDUM—

**Gen 22:20** And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor;

**Gen 22:21** Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram,

**Gen 22:22** And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

**Gen 22:23 And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother.**

**Gen 22:24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.**

Consistent throughout the Bible is a careful record of genealogy. In this case, we are introduced to characters who will become significant in Genesis 24; such as Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel (Gen. 24:15) and future wife of Isaac. This detail bridges chapters 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25. Thus, the phrase in Genesis 22:20—“And it came to pass after these things...”

# THE DEATH OF SARAH

## GENESIS 23

“To record the death and burial of a woman is unusual in Scripture. But Sarah was no ordinary woman; she was the mother of the long-awaited son of promise, the faithful companion of Abraham in all his wanderings...In the terms of Paul’s allegory (Gal 4:22-31), Sarah represented the Abrahamic covenant of faith; the Jerusalem from above. Originally that was limited to the nation of Israel, but in AD 70, with the overthrow of the Jewish State, this came to an end as far as a national covenant was concerned, and was buried among the Gentiles where it has remained ever since. This was foreshadowed in the death and burial of Sarah”—*Expositor*, pg. 265

Chronologically, the death and burial of Sarah (Gen. 23) follows the typical death and resurrection of Isaac (Gen. 22). By allegory, the overthrow of Jerusalem in AD 70 and the subsequent dispersion of the Jews and spreading of the Gospel to the Gentiles also followed the crucifixion of Jesus. This was necessary to develop a bride for Jesus Christ among all peoples; represented in the allegorical selection of Rebekah for Isaac (Gen. 24). A review of our notes on Genesis 21 might help refresh the mind concerning the allegory of Sarah and Hagar, and the Abrahamic covenant. Notwithstanding, it is relatively fundamental to perceive the basis for Bro. Mansfield’s statements.

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

“Sarah is the only woman whose age is mentioned in Scripture. As the wife of Abraham she is set forth as the mother of believers (Isa. 51:2; 1Pet. 3:6). She is also allegorical of the Abrahamic covenant, the heavenly Jerusalem, or polity of the faithful (Gal. 4:24-27), and Yahweh’s Bride (Isa. 54:5). As an organized entity, the heavenly Kingdom came to an end in AD 70 (Mat. 21:43), and was buried in Gentile lands, awaiting the political resurrection (Eze. 37). Meanwhile the Gentiles have been visited to acquire a bride for the seed of promise. Thus the death of Sarah and her burial among the Gentiles awaiting the resurrection, foreshadowed the death of the polity of the faithful in AD 70, and its burial among the Gentiles awaiting the political resurrection of the future”—*Expositor*, pg. 266

➤ **Concerning Sarah representing the Abrahamic covenant extending to the Gentiles:**

**Gal 4:22-31** “For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of

the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.”

➤ **Concerning the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and scattering of Abraham’s natural seed:**

**Mat 21:43** “Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

**Mat 22:7** “But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.”

**Luke 21:20-24** “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

➤ **Concerning the burial of Abraham’s natural seed and anticipated resurrection:**

**Ezek 37:1-28** “The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones...And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest...Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD...Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.”

It can be noted that death and burial, whether literal or figurative, is often likened unto “planting” in the ground: **READ: Rom. 6:5-6; 1Cor. 15:35-43; John 12:23-27.** Thus, the “planting” of Sarah in the Gentile land is representative of Abraham’s seed in dispersion, and also

the Abrahamic covenant being extended to the Gentiles. The day will come, however, when the natural seed of Abraham, now sown among the Gentiles, will be “planted” again in their own land (Jer. 31:27-28; Jer. 32:41; 42:10; Amos 9:15 cf. Mat. 15:13-14). According to the allegory, Sarah buried in the land of the Gentiles represents the mother of the Abrahamic seed planted among the Gentiles to bring forth fruit.

**Gen 23:2** 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.

Not only does Sarah represent Jerusalem, according to Paul’s allegory (Gal. 4:22-31), but the place where this matriarch died also represents Jerusalem, the City of the Great King. Kirjatharba signifies “City of The Four” (*Strong’s Concordance*). Jerusalem is also described as a city that lies “four-square”—

**Rev 21:16** “And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.”

Again, in the allegorical sense, Jerusalem was thrown down, or died, in AD 70. And the fact that she died in what is described as the “land of Canaan” represents the Gentile dominated land of Israel at the time of Jerusalem’s fall, following the death of Christ.

Furthermore, Abraham’s mourning and weeping for Sarah typified the sorrowful destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70—

**Luke 19:41-44** “And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

**Gen 23:3** And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying,

**Gen 23:4** 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.

This small burial place purchased by Abraham marks the only land he possessed in his lifetime (Acts 7:5). The reason he did so was to “bury (his) dead.” This is emphasized six times in the chapter (23:4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 15).

This place, “Machpelah” (Gen. 23:9), was the burying place for the patriarchs. Along with Sarah, Abraham (Gen. 25:9), Isaac and Rebekah, and Leah and Jacob (Gen. 49:30; 50:13) were buried here. Upon Sarah’s death it is quite significant that Abraham reaffirms himself as “a stranger and a sojourner.” Abraham’s “confession” constituted a statement recognizing that while Sarah—*allegorically*, Jerusalem—lay in the dust (until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled), Abraham and his seed would see the realization of the covenants of promise in the future Age and inhabit a city, whose builder and maker is God.

**Heb 11:8** “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.”

After mourning for Sarah, Abraham rose from the ground and “stood up before his dead,” and continued in life. And so it is with the Abrahamic Covenant. After Jerusalem was trodden down of the Gentiles—*Sarah’s death*—the promises were extended to the Gentiles:

**Mat. 24:14-16** “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whoso readeth, let him understand: Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains”

**Rom 11:25-27** “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.”

**Gen 23:5** **And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,**  
**Gen 23:6** **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.**

Like many Gentiles, the children of Heth acknowledge the importance of Abraham and his people (the Jews). Heth is identified Heth with the Hittites (Gen. 23:10 “*the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite*”). Some Hittites converted to the Hope of Israel and served in high positions in David’s army (ie. Uriah the Hittite—see: 1Sam. 26:6; 2Sam. 11:3). Solomon married Hittite wives (1Kin. 11:1), and Hittites became laborers in his kingdom (1Kin. 9:20-21). These people may well represent the Gentiles who bless Abraham and his seed (Gen. 12:3), even in dispersion.

**Gen 23:7** **And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth.**  
**Gen 23:8** **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,**  
**Gen 23:9** **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 principle of expending one’s own “money” represents a personal association and identification with the object being attained. KJV margin has “full money” (Gen. 23:9). The narrative that follows shows Abraham’s insistence upon purchasing the burying place for his wife, Sarah. **READ: 2Sam. 24:18-25**

**Gen 23:10** **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,**  
**Gen 23:11** **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.**  
**Gen 23:12** **And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.**

**Gen 23:13** 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.

That Abraham—representing the Covenant of Promise—gave “money for the field” for the burying place of Sarah is quite significant. The “field” represents nations or people of “the world”:

“He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; *The field is the world*; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one”—**Mat. 13:37-38**

“For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of *all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar* king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and *I have given him the beasts of the field* also”—**Jer. 28:14**

“And the LORD thy God will put out *those nations* before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest *the beasts of the field* increase upon thee”—**Deu. 7:22**

Allegorically, then, the death and burial of Sarah in “the field” represents the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and the dispersion of the Jews among the nations. The reason Abraham purchased this “field” of burial among the Gentiles, and refused to accept the plot of land to be “given” unto him emphasizes the doctrinal aspects of the Gospel of Grace—

**Rom 11:1-15** “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew...I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”

(NOTE: “riches of the Gentiles”—“life from the dead”)

To state it plainly, the Gentiles have nothing to offer the Jews in terms of salvation (the hope of Israel), for the relationship only works to the converse; the Jewish hope benefits the Gentiles. Even in their state of dispersion and figurative death (“valley of dry bones”—Eze. 37—Sarah’s death), the Jews are a benefit to the Gentiles, as expressed by Paul to the Romans.

**Gen 23:14** And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him,

**Gen 23:15** 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.

**Gen 23:16** 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.

That Abraham purchased the field and the cave by the “silver” form of currency, “weighed” in a “shekel” holds a significant meaning in Scripture, and points forward to a great principle—



**Exo 30:12-16** “When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD...The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls. And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.”

**1 Pet 1:18-19** “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot”

**READ: Exo. 38:25-27; Lev. 5:15**

“Silver is the price of redemption by which inheritance in the land is obtained. See its relationship to the price paid for the redemption of humanity, 1Pet. 1:16-19. Abraham weighed out the silver according to approved standards, so that his right to the cave (the token of his inheritance) was secured legally”—*Expositor*, pg. 269

As the “field” represents the “world” (see previous notes), so the death of Sarah—Jerusalem AD 70—resulted in the hope of redemption extended to the whole world, through the Abrahamic Covenant. That others benefit from the death of one is a principle found even outside of the obvious sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ (see: 2Kin. 13:21).

**Gen 23:17** **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**

The Field—“Figuratively speaking of the Gospel planting”—*Expositor*, pg. 270

All the Trees—“Figuratively, the people of God (Psa. 1:3; 92:12; Isa. 60:13)”—*Expositor*, pg. 270

**Gen 23:18** **Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city.**

“Abraham’s right to the portion of the land purchased, was made sure in the sight of the Canaanites. In like manner, the preaching of the Gospel has brought the certainty of Abraham’s future inheritance before all humanity”—*Expositor*, pg. 270

**Gen 23:19** **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.**

“Hebron means *to join, to unite, have fellowship*”—*Expositor*, pg. 270

**Gen 23:20** **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.**

With the place of Sarah's burying distinctly called "the cave" (Gen. 23:9, 11, 17, 19, 20), we are allegorically exhorted that Yahweh's purpose with Israel, whom she types, is not finished. Note the symbolic meaning of "the cave" in the Bible; it represents a temporary abode of safety—

**1 Sam 22:1-2** David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him. And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men.

**1 Ki 18:4** For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.)

While we are certain there are many more wonderful types to be discovered in this chapter, it surely serves as a most impressive account in the ALLEGORY OF ABRAHAM'S LIFE. We leave this final, and all-important thought: that Abraham laid his wife to rest in the grave and purchased her burial place among the Gentiles shows the power of the Abrahamic covenant to redeem both Jew and Gentile—Gal. 3:1-29. Furthermore, while Sarah, typical of Jerusalem trodden down and the Jews in dispersion, lay in lifeless in the dust (Eze. 37; Rom. 11), the Abrahamic covenant was extended to the Gentiles until the beloved wife of the noble Hebrew awakes from the death.