

Genesis 22-24

An Overview of Chapter 22

God devises a test to see whether Abraham has reverence for Him. This test is tough, Abraham is supposed to take his son and offer him as a burnt offering. Abraham shows up for the test, he travels to where God instructed him, Mount Moriah - some people believe this place will later be named Golgotha.

Father and son move closer to the place of sacrifice Isaac notices they have everything necessary for a burnt offering, a knife, fire, wood; oops where is the lamb? He questions his faithful father on this matter and is told that God will provide the sacrifice. Imagine Isaac's surprise when his father ties him up and lays him on the newly made altar!

Abraham prepares to slit his son's throat and drain out all his blood, but before he can accomplish this task the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and tells him not to slay his son. Abraham has passed the test - he has shown reverence for God above all, even his own son. Then God foreshadows Jesus as He provides a ram with a crown of thorns to die in Isaac's place. Because of Abraham's obedience God promises again to bless Abraham, multiply his descendants, give them victory over their enemies and bless the entire earth through them.

This chapter ends with a short genealogy of Abraham's brother Nahor that leads to a granddaughter named Rebekah.

An Overview of Chapter 23

At the age of 127 years Abraham's wife Sarah dies; having seen the promise of God fulfilled in her own son Isaac. Abraham mourns and weeps for his wife, then purchases a place to bury her. This is Abraham's first deed to any of the promised land.

An Overview of Chapter 24

The widower Abraham wants to find a wife for his son before he dies. He asks one of his servants to find a wife for him, but it cannot be a local girl (a Canaanite) it must be a relative. The servant agrees and tells his master "thigh will be done."

The servant travels to Mesopotamia, where Abraham's brother Nahor lives. When he arrives, he decides the local watering hole is the best place to pick up women, and it is apparently happy hour because the ladies are all coming to get a drink. Then the servant prays for his Lord to help him be successful in this task. He works out a sign with the Lord so he will know that it is the right woman for Isaac. The sign is simple, if he asks a lady to get him a drink she will offer to water his camels as well.

As soon as he finished his prayer, a beautiful young woman named Rebekah shows up. He pops the question, and she offers to get him a drink as well as his camels - SHE WAS THE ONE! He gives her a ring (a nose ring) and some bracelets and then asks whether he can stay at her father's house. She agrees and then tells him that her father is Bethuel and her grandfather is Nahor.

When the servant hears this he begins to worship God because he realizes that she is a relative of Abraham - Isaac's niece - just as Abraham had requested.

When they get to Rebekah's house, the servant refuses to eat until he can tell Rebekah's brother Laban the whole story. After finishing the story the servant asks whether he will be able to take Rebekah back to Isaac to be married, and he sweetens the deal with presents for both Rebekah and Laban. Laban agrees because "*the matter comes from the Lord.*" After some hesitation and consultation with Rebekah they allow her to leave after they bless her.

While Isaac is out meditating in the field, he sees the camels approaching and Rebekah sees him. It is "love at first sight," and they consummate the wedding in Isaac's dead mother's tent.

Reflection

What tests has God put you through in your life? What are you willing to sacrifice for God? Does your life prove to God that you revere Him? Have you allowed Jesus to be a substitute offering to make atonement for you? What promises of God have you seen fulfilled in your life? If you are looking for a spouse have you asked God to show you specifically which person it should be? Do you see the importance for believers today to marry only a close relative (a brother or sister in Christ)? Are you quick about fulfilling promises you have made to others, especially your Master?

For Further Study

Testing: Exodus 6:4-7, Deuteronomy 8:16, Psalm 26:1-7, Proverbs 17:3, John 6:1-14, 1Corinthians 3:12-13

Reverence/fear: Psalm 2:10-12, Proverbs 1:7, 10:27, 2Corinthians 7:1

Burnt offerings: Leviticus 1, Psalm 51

God's Promises: Deuteronomy 27:2-3, Acts 2:37-41, James 1:12, 2Peter 3:3-9