

## The Death of a Friend

Genesis 25: 5-11

Our text today reveals the end of a long and prosperous life lived for the Lord. There had been some significant moments in Abraham's life since his encounter with the Lord and the deliverance of Isaac on Mount Moriah. Most agree that Isaac would have been a mid to late teenager at that time. Following their experience on Mount Moriah, Sarah died some years later, being 127 years old. Being ninety when Isaac was born, she would have lived somewhere around ten years following this great test of faith. Abraham bought a piece of land in Hebron and buried Sarah in the cave of Machpelah. Following her death, Abraham sent his servant back to Mesopotamia to find a wife for Isaac, from among his own people. Rebekah was a comfort to Isaac as he dealt with the loss of his mother.

Our text today picks up some thirty-five years after the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah. Abraham had lived nearly forty years after the passing of his love, Sarah. Clearly the life of Abraham had been quite eventful. There had been ups and downs; but through it all, his faith in the Lord remained. Abraham remained faithful to God until the end.

Considering the life of Abraham stands as a challenge and even an encouragement to every believer. God provides for those who belong to Him. He has promised to never leave or forsake us in this journey of life. Surely, He is worthy of our devotion and service. When I hear the name Abraham mentioned, I am always reminded that he was considered the friend of God. [James 2:23 – And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.](#) As we discuss the [details](#) in the text before us, I want to consider: [The Death of a Friend](#).

**I. The Division of the Inheritance** (5-6) – Here we discover how Abraham divided the inheritance among his sons. Had we read the opening verses of this chapter, we would have discovered that Abraham remarried sometime after the death of Sarah and had six more sons. Including Ishmael and Isaac, Abraham had eight sons born to him. Consider:

**A. The Devotion** (5) – [And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.](#) While this may seem unusual, and even unfair in our culture, this was common in Abraham's day. Often the first-born son was recognized as the heir of the family and would assume the role of patriarch following the passing of the father. This reveals that Abraham had named Isaac the heir of the family and he would be recognized as the prominent son within the family. He would receive the greatest portion of the inheritance, having control over the family unit.

- This should come as no surprise. Isaac was the promised son, the one God had ordained to be born of Abraham, through which the nation of Israel would eventually come. God had a plan for a people He had called unto Himself. It would be a couple thousand years later, but His Son would be born through the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to bring salvation to humanity. This was all in accordance to God's sovereign will.

**B. The Dispersion** (6a) – *But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.* While the other sons did not receive the portion Isaac received, Abraham provided for them prior to his death. He was a wealthy man at this time, having many herds and possessions. These sons received the portion allotted to them of their father.

- Through Abraham's dealing with his sons, we see a beautiful picture of our future. We are heirs of God through our relationship with Jesus Christ. The Bible teaches that we are also joint-heirs with Him. While we will share in the glories of heaven with our Lord, He alone stands as the rightful Heir. We will not share in His position, His power, or His glory. We have been adopted into the family of God through His shed blood on the cross, but He is the Heir of God. *Heb.1:2 – [God] Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.* *Phil.2:9-11 – Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: <sup>[10]</sup> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; <sup>[11]</sup> And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**C. The Discernment** (6b) – *But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.* Again, we may think such actions were harsh, but Abraham was acting according to the will of God. Isaac would continue to follow the plan of God for the coming of Israel. Abraham didn't want anyone causing unnecessary strife for Isaac; he was the promised son and the rightful heir to the family. Had these sons stayed in Canaan, there would likely have been jealousy and contention.

- This is a hard lesson, but it remains needful in our day as well, especially for believers. We must guard our walk and witness with the Lord. At times we may need to distance ourselves from the influence of others. This doesn't mean that we don't love them, but we value our relationship with the Lord above all others. *2 Cor.6:16-17 – And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>[17]</sup> Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.*

**II. The Departure of the Patriarch (7-8)** – Here we find the biblical account of Abraham’s death. Consider:

**A. The Duration of Life (7)** – *And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.* It’s quite amazing when you consider the life of Abraham. We know that people lived longer then than they do today, but it was still miraculous. Abraham was seventy-five when God called him from his home to follow Him to Canaan. He waited twenty-five years for Isaac to be born, but through it all, God was faithful. At one hundred years of age, God provided the promised son. Abraham was blessed with another seventy-five years with his son. In all, Abraham had walked with God for one hundred years! There had been seasons of joy and seasons of despair. Abraham had missed the mark at times, but he never abandoned his faith.

- We can’t look at the life of Abraham and assume that faithfulness will always lead to a long and lasting life. It may; but then again, it may not. Our focus here should be on making the most of the time God has given us. Whether we live to be a hundred, or die at a young age, our lives should be marked by faithfulness to God. May it be said of all of us that we served the Lord faithfully throughout our lives!

**B. The Transition from Life (8)** – *Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.* Although Abraham had served the Lord for one hundred years, there came a time for him to die. It seems apparent that Abraham died peacefully. He had lived a long and prosperous life, walking with the Lord and being recognized as His friend. Even in death, God remained faithful to Abraham. We find that *he was gathered to his people.* We know that he had secured the burial place for Sarah, but she was the only buried there at this time. It doesn’t seem logical to assume this is speaking merely of his place of burial. I am convinced this speaks of Abraham being gathered with those believers who had gone before him. He entered the Lord’s presence in paradise. When Abraham departed this life, he found himself fellowshiping with those who had faithfully served the Lord before him. Early in the Old Testament we find assurance of life beyond the grave!

- As believers we share this same assurance. Christ tasted death on the cross, bearing our sin and enduring the wrath of God, so we could escape the penalty of death. Paul affirmed that being absent from the body, we are present with the Lord. He also revealed the promise of resurrection for the saved by grace, [1 Thes.4:13-18](#).

**III. The Dedication to the Patriarch (9-11)** – Finally we see the dedication and respect shown to Abraham at his death. Consider:

**A. The Cooperation** (9) – [And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre.](#) Although Ishmael had been sent out from Abraham years earlier, he returned to help Isaac bury their father in the cave of Machpelah. Whatever differences the two may have had, they laid those aside to honor their father. (This serves as a challenge for us as well. Sometimes we have to do the right thing, being a faithful witness for the Lord, even if it requires us to swallow our pride and extend forgiveness.)

**B. The Completion** (10) – [The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.](#) Life had come full circle for Abraham. He and Sarah had been faithful to God and each other. There had been some difficult moments, but their love for each other never wavered. She had been at his side when they began their journey with the Lord. She was his faithful companion and the mother of their promised son. Now Abraham was returned to her in death. His body was buried beside of her in the burial place in Hebron. They were reunited in the Lord's presence as well.

- I am thankful that death is not final for the believer. We are all heading that way; death is certain for all us unless the Lord returns very soon. As difficult as death is, we do know we will enter the presence of the Lord and be reunited with loved ones who have gone on before if we are saved. No greater testimony can be left behind than that of a faithful couple who were committed to each other and the Lord throughout their lives. There will be a great reunion day for the saved!

**C. The Continuation** (11) – [And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi.](#) Abraham left a legacy following his death. He had been faithful to follow the Lord and God honored his faithfulness. Abraham had instilled a love for God within Isaac. God blessed Isaac in part because of the faithfulness of Abraham. Even after his death, Abraham continued to impact his family.

- Each of us should desire to leave that type of legacy behind. Money and possessions will soon be spent and gone. However, we can leave a heritage of faithfulness and service to God. We can live our lives in such a way that it continues to influence others long after we are gone. All our lives have been shaped and impacted by others. I want to leave a godly heritage for my children and those who come after me. Living a life of commitment and faithfulness to God will encourage others to continue for the Lord.

**Conclusion:** We cannot live the life Abraham lived, but we can live in a way that honors God. We too will have our share of ups and downs, but the Lord remains faithful. I want to be found faithful to Him when He calls for me. Are you saved and serving the Lord? If not, now is the time to begin.