

# Learn to Read Genesis Effectively

Distance Learning Programme

Session 9



All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from *The New King James Version*.  
Copyright 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved

---

## **SESSION 9**

---

<b>Genesis 22 v 1 to 23 v 20 – Abraham and Isaac</b>	<b>Page 1</b>
<b>22 v 1 to 19 – Beersheba to Moriah and back</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>23 v 1 to 20 – Sarah’s death and burial</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The significance of the promises to Abraham</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Optional assignment 9</b>	<b>6</b>



# Genesis 22 v 1 to 23 v 20 – Abraham and Isaac

## 22 v 1 to 19 – Beersheba to Moriah and back



Read Genesis 22 v 1 to 24

*22 v 1 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”*

*2 Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”*

This passage is an uncomfortable one for many people, but the lessons are important for those who want to understand the Bible. It is the only journey (with the possible exception of leaving Haran) where we know that Abraham was told by God to go to a particular place. He was told to go to the land of Moriah; to one of the mountains which God would show him. The record gives no detail of the exact location, but it was in the same area as the “threshing floor of Araunah (or Ornan)” which was purchased by David (2 Samuel 24 v 16 to 25) and which was the site of the first Temple, built by Solomon (2 Chronicles 3 v 1).

This journey was probably the most momentous in Abraham’s life. We are not told how old Abraham and Isaac were at this time. The use of the word “lad” would imply a child or teenager to us, but the same word is used of the “young men” who helped Abraham rescue Lot in Genesis 14 v 24. So Isaac was not necessarily a young boy.



- Here was the supreme test – love for God or love for his son – which would take priority?
- God knew Abraham, and it says much for his standing in the sight of God that he was deemed capable of responding to such a demand on his faith as this

*22 v 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning ...*

Abraham responded early the following day. There was no hesitation; he acted decisively when God expected action, even though the command was so dreadful.

*22 v 5 And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.”*

**X-Ref -**  
Genesis  
22 v 5



Hebrews 11 v 17 to 19

The phrase “we will come back to you” tells us that Abraham was totally confident that if he killed Isaac, God would raise him from the dead. Abraham had finally learned to trust God with his greatest treasure – his son’s life. He now believed, after so much evidence, that God really did look after him and care for him. There are no more failures recorded in his life.

There can be little doubt that Isaac became fully aware of the purpose of their journey. The repeated phrase “the two of them went together” shows the unity of purpose which bound father and son together in this journey of self-sacrifice. We shall see more evidence of Isaac’s meek and obedient character in later sessions.

Just as Abraham was about to kill Isaac, God stopped him, and Abraham offered instead of his son a ram that was caught in a thicket. This supreme demonstration of his faith led to the greatest promise of all.

*22 v 15 Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,*

*16 and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—*

*17 blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.*

*18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”*

The main points of these final promises to Abraham are:

- God would bless Abraham
- He would have a vast number of descendants
- His descendants would “possess the gate of” or “overcome” their enemies (whoever possessed the gate of a city controlled the whole city)
- All nations of the earth would be blessed through Abraham’s descendants

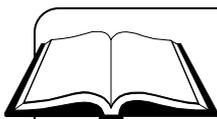
Abraham’s faith, expressed in the words “we will come back to you”, was vindicated, as he and Isaac rejoined the young men left behind.

The return journey from the most momentous event in the life of Abraham is dismissed in just one verse (v 19), which ends with the words “and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba”.

We are not told how long he stayed there. He was 100 when Isaac was born (21 v 5), and he died at the age of 175 (25 v 7). So if we take Isaac to be in his thirties when the call came to sacrifice him, Abraham lived at least 35 years more at Beersheba.

Verses 20 to 24 of this chapter record the family of Nahor, and include the first mention of Rebekah, who was to become Isaac’s wife.

## 23 v 1 to 20 – Sarah’s death and burial



Read Genesis 23 v 1 to 20

*23 v 2 So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan ...*

We saw at the end of the last chapter that Abraham was living at Beersheba. It is a little surprising to find that Sarah died in Kirjath-Arba, or Hebron, over 20 miles away, and there is no explanation as to why she was there.

23 v 2 ... *Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.*

Whatever the reason for their separation at the time of Sarah's death, Abraham's response shows that the marriage bond was as strong as ever.

The rest of the chapter shows how Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah at Hebron, which became the last resting place of several other faithful characters we shall meet as we continue through Genesis. Chapter 25 v 7 to 10 reveals that Abraham was also buried in this cave when he died.

## Lessons from Abraham's life



- Abraham had sufficient confidence and trust in God to leave a comfortable but godless city to spend his life wandering from place to place and living in tents
- He frequently remembered God by "calling on His Name"
- Sometimes he didn't have enough faith in God. His actions then caused real problems, but God did not forsake him at these times, and rescued him
- He remained humble, hospitable, unselfish and generous despite his special relationship with God
- He did not rebel against the hardest command of all – to offer his son Isaac
- By this action he showed that he believed in the resurrection of the dead
- He became an example to believers of all ages, and the record of his life provides illustrations to help us understand God's way of salvation

We have now looked in this and the preceding session mainly at two characters, Abraham and Lot. They show two ways of life. Lot tried to live a Godly life, but also wanted the luxury and pleasure that a godless city offered. Abraham realised that seeking what this world had to offer would ultimately only cause problems. The Bible is full of examples of both kinds of people. Watch for the two types as we go through Genesis. These examples are there so that we can learn and apply the lessons in our own lives.

## The significance of the promises to Abraham

We have seen that at five stages in Abraham's life God made promises to him and his descendants. The repetition of these promises shows that they are important. If we put together all the points from the five occasions they are given, we have a list as follows:

- God would bless Abraham
- Abraham would be a great man, father of a great nation whose God would be Abraham's God
- Abraham and his descendants would have an endless right to the land of Canaan, stretching from "the river of Egypt" to the River Euphrates
- His descendants would overcome their enemies
- God would treat nations according to how they treated Abraham's descendants
- Abraham would be a father of many nations, and kings would come from his family
- All nations would be blessed through Abraham and his descendants
- The covenant would be everlasting

There are echoes of these promises throughout the rest of the Bible. We will have a look at some cross-references from the promises given in chapter 22.

**X-Refs -**  
Genesis  
22 v 18

Acts 3 v 25; Galatians 3 v 8, 9, 16, 27 to 29

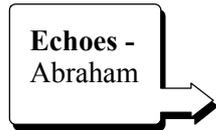
The Acts reference tells us:

- God's covenant was with the nation descended from Abraham – the Jews
- Jesus is involved in the blessings to Abraham

The Galatians references tell us:

- God gave the "gospel" to Abraham
- Those who have the same faith as Abraham can share his blessings
- Abraham's promises come through one special descendant – Jesus Christ
- Anyone can be involved in the promises to Abraham through baptism

You will see more how Christ's work relates to the promises made to Abraham if you read all of Galatians 3.



Hebrews 11 v 8 to 13, 39 and 40

These echoes give us the following additional information:

- Abraham did not look for security and a settled place in this life
- He and Sarah did not receive the promises in this life
- Abraham will receive the promised blessings at the same time as everyone else who shares his faith and hope

If you wish to see more echoes of the promises throughout the rest of the Bible, have a look at the cross-references in the *Cross-references* booklet from the five passages where the promises occur. These are:

Genesis 12 v 2, 3 and 7; 13 v 14 to 17; 15 v 18 to 21; 17 v 2, 4, 6 to 8 and 22 v 16 to 18

## Optional assignment 9

### More “Echoes” from Genesis 22

We have listed some of the cross-references from various phrases in chapter 22. Have a look at them and see what you can learn from them.

v 2	your only son	John 3 v 16
	whom you love	John 5 v 20
v 6	laid it on Isaac	John 19 v 17; 1 Peter 2 v 24
v 8	God will provide ... the lamb	John 1 v 29 and 36; 1 Peter 1 v 19
v 10	Abraham ... took the knife to slay his son	Isaiah 53 v 6 to 12

---

# Notes

# Notes