

Community Bible Church

The Book of Genesis

Chapters 23-24

Genesis chapters 23 and 24 present a very personal look at the family life of the patriarch Abraham. The narrative in **chapter 23** describes Abraham negotiating for a burial site for his wife, Sarah, after her death at age 127 (**23:1**). In **chapter 24** Abraham reveals his plan to arrange a search for a wife for his son, Isaac. These two chapters can be outlined as follows:

Abraham seeks a grave for Sarah. Chapter 23
Abraham seeks a wife for Isaac. Chapter 24.

While **chapter 23** is a relatively short chapter (20 verses) which focuses primarily on the acquisition of land for a family burial site in Canaan, **chapter 24** is the longest chapter in **Genesis** (67 verses). This chapter is described by one commentator as “**A delightful chapter, charmingly written**” and by another as “**A touching love story of Abraham finding a bride for his son, and the bride's willingness to leave her family and share her life with a man she had never met.**”

1. There seems to be three main sections in **chapters 23**. After reading this chapter, write your own brief summary, in one or two sentence, next to each section.
 - (a) **Abraham’s Tears (23:1-2)**
 - (b) **Abraham’s Testimony (23:3-13)**
 - (c) **Abraham’s Transaction (23:14-20)**
2. What most interested you in this entire narrative in **chapter 23**? Note that eventually, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their wives will all be buried **in** the Cave of Machpelah near Mamre in the land of Canaan.

3. In **chapter 24** Abraham commissions his trusted servant (perhaps Eliezer of **Genesis 15**) to journey to his homeland and identify a potential bride for Isaac. Read **24:1-9** and write some of the conditions and details of this charge.
4. Read the narrative in **24:10-14**, in which the first stages of this trip are described. If the servant travels in a straight line to Ur of the Chaldeans (modern day Iraq) it is a 1200 mile round trip. What occurred in **24:12-14** and what does this suggest about the servant?
5. Read **24:15-16** and see if you can determine the familial relationship between **Rebekah** and **Isaac**. You might need to read **22:20-23** for additional information. Is this a wise plan put forth by Abraham? Describe Rebekah from **24:16**.
6. What happens in **24:17-33** and what are your thoughts regarding this passage? How does Rebekah's brother **Laban** respond to this entire situation?
7. While sitting around the dinner table, Abraham's trusted servant presents the entire plan in **24:34-48**. How does this servant graciously refer to God as being the one orchestrating this journey? What occurs in **24:49**? How does Rebekah respond in **24:58**?
8. Describe some of the interesting details of their return pilgrimage in **24:59-61**?
9. How does this touching, Old Testament love story conclude in **24:62-67** and what are the implications in the overall story and plan of redemption in the Bible?