

Genesis 23 - Lifted Up

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[0 : 00] Lord, there's so much in your word, Lord, and then sometimes you drop in these funny little chapters that, you know, if we had never read this and we still read the rest of the book, how much would we have missed out on?

And it doesn't seem like much in one sense, Lord, but then we remember that, Lord, not one little punctuation mark of your word will fail, will pass away, that it all has purpose and meaning.

And Lord, as we've looked at this life of Abraham, a long life, and Sarah's too, she was 127 years old when she died, but we're only given such little snippets of their life.

So it's not about what happened in their life, it's about what the Holy Spirit wanted us to know now in your word. And so, Lord, I pray that you would speak to us, Lord, the truths that are contained herein, and that they would affect our lives for your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.

So Abraham, if you remember, he was in Beersheba, he was told to go to Moriah to offer Isaac, and then after that, he comes back at the end of chapter 22, and it says he returned with the young men in verse 19 of 22, and they went back to Beersheba together.

[1 : 18] Now he's come up towards closer to Jerusalem, I mean, not Jerusalem, to Hebron. You can kind of see between Moriah, or where Jerusalem is, and Beersheba, it's Hebron, and that's kind of where he originally was. It seems to be his place that he loved, and he's come back there now, either to bury Sarah, or he was there at the time of her death.

And so my title for today's message is Lift It Up, and it'll make sense more as we go on. So in verse 1, it says, And Sarah was 107 and 20 years old. These were the years of the life of Sarah.

So if you remember, Abraham was 10 years older than Sarah, so that means he's 137. And it means Isaac is 37, because Abraham was 100 when he had Isaac.

How old was Isaac when he was offered on Moriah? We don't know for sure. Like we said before, my guess is somewhere in the range of the age Jesus was. So 25 to 30, something like that.

Either way, this is a number of years after that, and Sarah's now died. I was thinking of Sarah, that she was quite an interesting lady as we've gone through the text here in Genesis. She doesn't come across as the most warm of people.

[2 : 40] She seems very sure of herself. She seems very forceful. We're told in the New Testament, the two places speaking of her, in Hebrews 11, verse 11, says, Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

So this is her claim to fame in the hall of faith, that she, through faith, through her trust in God, she judged God faithful who had promised through Abraham to her. She believed that.

Then Peter tells us in 1 Peter 3, verse 6, in giving an example of how godly women should live, he says, Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord, whose daughters you are, as long as you do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

We looked at that before, how the idea isn't that she called him Lord, but that she was willing to put her trust in God, and trust him with the outcomes that resulted in the choices that her husband made.

I mean, Abraham, right when they left Ur of the Chaldees, he said, Honey, we're going to go on a trip. God's calling us to go. And she's like, All right. Now wherever we go, just say you're my sister, because they might kill me.

[3 : 54] They'll take you to wife, but at least I'll still be alive. She agrees. This is like the plan. And we're given two places that we actually get to see that, with Egypt, and then when they go down into Gerar with Abimelech.

And it plays out that way, where Sarah's taken, and here's Abraham. You know, he's like, I'm still alive. All right. Sarah, what's she thinking? When she's sitting in the king's harem. Well, Lord, he did it again.

You know, he's yours. Take care of him. And God rescues her out of that situation. But she doesn't come across terribly warm and fuzzy in the times we see her. She's confronting Hagar.

She's bringing Hagar to Abraham, saying, Take her to be a wife so I can get a child. Then she's mad at Abraham. And then even later, after she has Isaac, when she says to Abraham, this son of the bondwoman will not be heir with my son.

It's not very gentle. So, but she has faith. And God commends her for it. And she actually gets in the hall of faith. And she's held up as an example for a godly woman.

[4 : 54] So I think we can draw the application that personality doesn't necessarily indicate a person's relationship with the Lord. You can have a personality that may be much more gentle, much more kind, and have a terrible relationship with the Lord.

You may not read his word. You may ignore his commands. Or you could be someone who's a little brusque or maybe doesn't have a lot of natural graces. But you have the Lord.

And you have faith in him. You put your trust in him. God can work through those things, as he did with Sarah in her life. But as we've gone through the life of Abraham, especially as we've gotten to the son of promise, right?

What are we going to see next on the time clock here? When we get into chapter 24, that's 67 verses long. So that'll at least take us through March to get through that.

But what happens next is Abraham's going to send his unnamed servant, right? And he's going to go and he's going to find a bride for his son. And so the typology is the father sends the unnamed servant into the world to find a bride for the son of promise.

[6 : 03] The unnamed servant brings the bride back. And where does it say that the son of promise meets the bride? As he walks in the field. Where did Jesus meet us? As he's walking in the field of the world, he met us.

And then it says he left his father's house. He walks out of his father's house to meet her as she comes, just as Jesus is going to return to meet us. But Sarah's not there. Sarah never got to meet Rebecca.

She didn't get to know him. And so in the typology, the spouse of Abraham didn't get to meet the bride of the son of promise.

Well, Jeremiah 31, verses 31 through 33, the Lord is speaking and says, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they break.

Although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord. And then he gives the promise of the new covenant, which we partake in, grafted into Israel. But throughout scripture, Israel is referred to in typology, in kind of the way God looks at his relationship with them, as a spouse, particularly a wayward spouse, one that is not faithful, where the church is referred to as the bride of Christ.

[7 : 25] Sarah, the spouse, didn't get to meet the bride. And if you think of where we're at right now in history, the bride, Israel's relationship with God, Israel's kind of, in a sense, been set aside so that the church in this church age is now how God's working through the world, right?

We know that time clock's gonna start up again, and Israel will again be God's focus. But in the sense that the bride and the spouse, the church and Israel are together acknowledging the Messiah, that doesn't happen until after the tribulation, until the beginning of Christ's reign.

And so you see here, Sarah will not meet Rebecca until they are together in glory and in victory. So it's some cool typology. We're gonna continue a little bit with that typology.

Not exactly, but there's a phrase in here, and you can see it on here, the Prince of God. And thinking I wasn't gonna have any slides anyway, this was an interesting chapter to kind of, to do this with and see this picture that I think God has in here for us.

But anyway, let's keep going. So she dies, and it says that Abraham mourned for her and wept for her. You know, we are told in Thessalonians that we are to weep, but not as those that have no hope.

[8 : 42] We are to mourn, but not as those that have no hope. And the hope is that Paul is saying, hey, those that have died in Christ, they will not prevent you. We will all together be at his return.

So we are to mourn, but not as those that have no hope. And then Romans says this. I thought this was interesting. In Romans 12, Paul is kind of laying out, it's kind of Romans version of 1 Corinthians, version of the spiritual gifts.

Paul is saying, hey, you all have different gifts. They differ. And the first part of that, he says in verse four, for as we have many members in one body and all members have not the same office, so we being many are in one body in Christ and everyone members of another.

That's kind of like the premise of everything that follows. And one of the things that follows then is this. Rejoice with them that do rejoice. Weep with them that weep. Why? Because we're all part of one body.

And as one body, we should feel every part that's happening within our body. We don't want one part to be numb. You know, I just stubbed my toe. I don't even feel it. I don't care.

[9 : 43] Whatever. It's numb. We don't want to be a body that's like that. We want to be sensitive to what's going on within the body. But we should weep with those that weep. So there is a correct way to mourn.

Scripture says we are to mourn with one another, but not as those that have no hope. And so he rises up and whether he's in Hebron or whether he goes there in verse three, he stands up before from before his dead and he speaks unto the sons of Heth.

Those are literally Hittites. And the name means fear or terror. So he stands up before the sons of fear. He says to them, I'm a stranger and a sojourner with you.

Give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

Abraham is in the land God had promised will be his and his descendants for generations to come. He's had Isaac now, and yet he still doesn't own anything in this place.

All the way down to David and beyond, Israel will still recognize that this world isn't their home.

Psalm 39 verse 12, David says, Hear my prayer, O Lord.

[10 : 49] Give ear unto my cry. Hold not your peace at my tears, for I am a stranger with you and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. It doesn't mean he's a stranger to God. It just means like, God, we are together, strangers in this world.

Recognizing that, because Abraham looked for a city whose builder and maker was God. But now he realizes he has a need for something in this world. He has a need for a grave.

And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my Lord. That's Adon, or master, where we get Adonai. Hear us, my Lord. It's a term of respect. Thou art a mighty prince among us, and the choice of our sepulchre is bury thy dead.

None of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. So we're eventually gonna see where this one guy, who Abraham really likes his property, Ephron, he's gonna say, well, I'm gonna give it to you.

Well, this is kind of the part of the bargaining process. You know, if you wanted to buy something from me, I'd say, oh, don't you just take it? And the correct response wouldn't be, thank you, and you take it. It would be, no, no, no, no, no, I'll pay for it.

[12 : 00] And I would come back and say, it's worthless. You know, it's all, you know, that car that's worth \$8,000, it's worthless. It's only worth \$15,000. And you'd be like, oh, \$15,000, I can't do \$15,000.

Maybe \$4,000. You know, you go back and forth. It's kind of how they would do that. It was expected here. But they interpose something extra here. They say, thou art a mighty prince among us.

They recognize something about Abraham. They've lived with him now for a while. After the encounter Abraham had with, in Gerar, with Abimelech, and then they make a covenant together and sojourn in the land, and they've watched.

They've watched this man and his son. They've watched the way he's dealt with them. And they say, you're a mighty prince. That word there, mighty, is literally Elohim.

It's actually in the Hebrew. The word prince is couched between Elohim. So it's saying that you are a prince of God among us.

[12 : 59] You recognize that about Abraham. There's something different about you, buddy. You do things different. You know, you have a relationship with God. And so I want to look at how, as we go through this scripture, when I read that, I was like, a prince of God.

And then I began to look at each verse and realize, well, how does a prince of God interact in this way? How does a prince of God respond over here? And there's this picture of how a prince of God responds to living among the children of fear.

So let's back up real quick and answer a couple questions. Starting up here in verse two, where we said that we are to mourn, but not of those who have no hope.

Well, the prince of God, he mourns in hope. So we see Abraham in verse two. He's mourning, but it's not as one doesn't have hope. He's going to buy a piece of property for Sarah, but that's not her end point.

That's just a temporary place for her. And then in verse four, where he said, I'm a stranger among you. Give me a possession of a burying place. Well, the prince of God, he recognizes this world, it's fit only for death.

[14:10] He hasn't had any need for property or to own anything until now that his wife has died. This world, it's only fit for death. It's only fit to house death.

It can't contain life. Life will continue on to eternity. And the prince of God, he knows the grave is only temporary. This is not Sarah's final resting place.

Before we dive into the rest of the chapter, the word prince, the word prince means one that is lifted up. That's why I put that little slide in the beginning, the guy being knighted.

It's one who's being lifted up into a position. It appears 103 times in the scriptures, 93 times in the Old Testament, 10 in the New. In the New Testament, it means master, it means like ruler or authority.

In the Old Testament, it's the same idea, but it literally means one that's been raised to this position, who's been lifted up to this position. And you think of our position in Christ, that we have been made kings and priests with God.

[15:15] They're calling Abraham here, the prince of God, one who's been lifted up by God. Now, there's other places that prince appears in scripture.

There's other princes, shall we say, in Daniel chapter 12, verse one, Daniel's praying, and then he's getting revelation, and then you get down to verse 12, and the vision he sees, and at that time, shall Michael stand up, the great prince, which stands for the children of thy people, Israel.

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. So Michael, a prince, the idea of one who's been lifted up into a position of authority, and as a ruler, he is a prince, an angel, whose job it is to oversee the affairs in the spiritual realm, and defend Israel.

He's still doing that to this day. You realize that? Michael is still fighting on behalf of God's people, Israel. But there he's a prince. There's another prince.

Did I not include that scripture? I must not have. But where it talks about Satan being the prince in the power of the air, that he's a prince as well. Now, did God exalt him to that position?

[16:38] No. He's just one who's been lifted up. Now, he lifted himself into that position, didn't he? But there's one position we can never lift ourselves into, and that's the position Abraham holds, being a prince with God.

You can't decide that for yourself. God has to do that. He has to raise you into that position. So there are other places of authority, but only God can raise us into the position of prince with God.

And then lastly, our prince, in Isaiah 9, for unto us a child is born, and unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince, the one who's been raised up for peace, the Prince of Peace.

And of the increase in his government, there shall be no end. And so there is a prince of God, and a prince who is God himself.

So they said to Abraham, you are a prince of God among us. We recognize this, and Abraham's life is such an example to them that they can see that he lives different from them, and he has set himself apart by the way he lives.

[17:49] And so in verse five, the children of Heth answered him, saying unto him, Hear us, my Lord, thou art a prince of God among us. And the choice of our sepulchres bury your dead.

And so the prince of God, he has an effect, he has a witness, an impact on these sons of fear, doesn't he? We as princes of God, as children of God, we live among the sons of fear just the

same, don't we?

So how should we live? How should a prince of God live among the people of fear? Well, he lives in such a way that it has an impact upon their life. Because they say to him, Hey, take whatever you want. And Abraham stood up in verse seven and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth.

And so the prince of God reflects a life of surrender, doesn't he? He didn't stand up and say, You're right, guys. I'm in charge here. I'm a big man with God. I'm a prophet. Remember, you're king, you recognize me as a prophet.

You need to do what I tell you. No, he stood up and bowed himself. He humbled himself. He showed that his life was surrendered, not to these men, but his life was surrendered to God. And he commanded with them, or communed with them, I always call that, say commanded there, communed with them saying, If it's in your mind that I should bury my debt out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron, the son of Zoar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he has, which is in the end of the field, for as much money as it's worth, he shall give it to me for possession of a burying place among you.

[19 : 15] So this is Abraham's response. And the prince of God, he trusts God for the outcome. He trusts that this is in God's hand. He says, Hey, look, if it be in your mind, I should bury my debt.

You know, if you're going to go along with me, great. You know what? This is in God's hands. I'm trusting that the outcome is in his hands. And then the prince of God will pay whatever it takes to receive a double portion.

Why did I say double portion? Well, the word Machpelah, because he wants the cave of Machpelah, literally means doubling and portion. And so here, Abraham's saying, whatever it's worth, I'll pay it.

I'll pay it because I need this place. And the prince of God will pay whatever costs to receive his portion. And then the prince of God has unlimited resources, doesn't he?

Because he says in the middle of verse nine, for as much money as it's worth, he shall give it to me for a possession of a burying place amongst you. Now, like we said, this is kind of part of their little back and forth, but we're going to see Abraham totally does away with that usual method of bartering.

[20 : 21] because he says, I'll pay whatever you ask. Ephron's going to come back with this crazy number and he's going to go, okay, no problem. I'll pay that. Because he has unlimited resources because his resources aren't of this world.

We used to say that a lot more than we do now in our home as we were going through the process of moving into our home and seeing the interest rates skyrocket and the ridiculous prices of homes.

And it's like, well, how do we can afford that? It's like, well, my father has unlimited resources. And then my oldest, I think at one point, she was like, I wish he'd give us a few more. But he gives when he's needed.

He's never, ever left us in a place of begging bread, like he says in Psalms. Remember what Jesus said when the guy came and said, Lord, I'll follow you anywhere, anywhere you want to go.

And he says, foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. He's, I don't have a home. When the disciples said, Lord, teach us to pray, he said, pray in this way, our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[21 : 25] Give us this day our daily bread. So Jesus said, as a follower of God, you ask for food for today, then don't expect anywhere to lay your head. Well, I've got food for weeks and I've got a place to lay my head.

So already, I'm blessed even beyond what Jesus said to expect. He's so good and so gracious and he gives blessing on blessing. We look at the world around us and think, well, I don't got as much as whoever.

But there's so many people that have less. We don't ever compare to them. We only compare to the people who have more. But our Father has unlimited resources and Abraham recognizes this.

He says, I'm not about doing what you people are doing. I don't live for this world. And then Ephron, this guy who he wanted his field in his cave, he dwelt among the children of Heth.

And Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham and the audience of the children of Heth, even all that went in at the gate of his city. So here's Abraham. He's at this city here. It's all of these people, all

the children of Hath, all of the sons of fear and Abraham alone by himself because the prince of God stands alone among the sons of fear.

[22 : 32] He's not afraid. He's a prince of God. He's been lifted up and given position in God's eyes, whether the world recognizes it or not. And so he stands alone among these sons of fear.

And Ephron says, Nay, my Lord, hear me. The field give I thee and the cave that's therein, I give it to you in the presence of all the sons of my people. Give I it to you.

Bury your dead. And Abraham's honored. This is a response of honor. Yes, it's a bargaining thing, but he still uses that word Adon or master. And the prince of God is honored among all men.

Even the sons of fear. You know, Proverbs tells us that if a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. I always think you can take that word enemies out, put whatever you want in there. When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his mother-in-law to be at peace with him.

You know, when a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his boss to be at peace with him.

The idea is, if your ways please the Lord, the Lord's got the rest, right? And so Abraham now, he gets his response from Ephron, and in verse 12, Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.

[23 : 44] The prince of God lives in humility, doesn't he? James tells us in 4 verse 10 to humble ourselves in the sight of God, and he will lift you up. Backwards from the world, isn't it?

Wait, wait, wait, wait, God. You just raised me to this position. Now I'm supposed to humble myself? Well, the only way you get to that position in God's economy, the only way God lifts you up as a prince of God is through humility.

Humble ourselves before the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time. And so Abraham, he lives in humility, and he interacts in humility.

He doesn't do this from a place of pride. And then he speak unto Ephron, in the audience of the people in the land, saying, but if you will give it, I pray thee, hear me.

I will give you money for the field. Take it of me, and I'll bury my dead there. So now they're kind of starting this back and forth thing. I'm going to give it to you. Say, no, no, no, no, no. I'm not going to take it.

[24 : 42] Even if I could, I'm not going to because I recognize where true value lies. It doesn't lie in this money. He knows where the true value lies.

The prince of God knows where true value lies. And he also commands attention, doesn't he?

Because when he speaks, the whole audience of the people, he spake unto Ephron, and the audience of the people of the land, they're all listening.

This was a big deal for Abraham to come in. He must have, in that time, been known as, you know, he had thousands of servants. His caravan must have been massive. When he moved back into Hebron from Beersheba, it must have been like, that guy Abraham's back.

Remember when he went, oh, I remember when he went over to Gerar. Oh, remember with Abimelech? Yeah. Be nice to him. Okay? You wonder if maybe when Ephron's here, going back and forth, if some of the guys in the gate are like, I wish he would just, just give him the property and get rid of him.

I can't believe you're trying to make money off of him. Like this. But the prince of God knows where true value lies. The world doesn't. Ephron thinks that his value is in the money he's getting. He has no idea what he's doing and what he's about to do.

[25 : 51] Abraham has no possession in the land of promise. He's about to, the scripture's going to tell us twice, this was made sure to him. That means it's a deed. That means it's done. It's his.

When Israel goes back into the land after they've been out of it in Egypt for 400 years and they go back into the land and Judah, I believe, is given the tribe for Hebron and Jerusalem somebody in the tribe of Judah came across this field and saw the little sign here lies Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob in the field of Machpelah, I mean the cave of Machpelah.

One of those guys came back. That was already there. They just were coming home. In 1948, when Israel comes back into the land, somewhere over there is a cave, Machpelah, which was Abraham's, where he's buried and Sarah's buried, it's still there.

You know who's not buried there? Ishmael's not buried there. He's not. Only Abraham's son, Isaac. It's the Jews. It's their land.

long before any Palestinian ever thought of calling himself a Palestinian, Abraham sitting down with Ephron, the Hittite, not the Palestinian, going, I'm going to purchase this and here's the account that I legally own this property.

But this guy doesn't see that. All he sees is dollars and cents, dollars and cents. I would like to think that's happening today, but it's worse than that. When you see what's happening around the world, the hatred and animosity towards Israel, it's not even for money or gain anymore.

[27 : 25] It's just out and out evil. It's just the wickedness of the enemy. You know, I read a thing that said that these type of protests, if you want to call them, or this type of hatred, springs up quickest where the enemy has the easiest infiltration.

And it's into the liberals, into the wokes, into the people that have already gone so far down the path away from morality and anti-God, that it's very easy for the enemy just to stir him up.

We've been seeing that as we've gone through Acts, right? The crowds that have so quickly been stirred up by the enemy to attack his people. So it's not even for money or gain today. It's just wickedness.

And yet behind that is God's hand, isn't it? It's God's hand bringing all of this to the point of the lead up to the final story. So Ephraim, Ephraim says, in verse 14, he answered him saying, My Lord, hearken unto me.

The land's worth 400 shekels of silver. But what is that betwixt me and thee? Bury thy dead. It's nothing. It's no big deal. Makes me think of, we at one time had the silliest of idea to try and purchase a car from a car dealer.

[28 : 43] Crazy idea. And we went in, it was, Mitsubishi? We got this thing in the mail, this ad. Whoa, wow, great. You go in, you're like, hey, this car.

Oh, no, no, no. We don't have that exact model. But they had the exact car in every way, shape, and form. Just not like the VIN number or whatever. Such a bait and switch. So anyway, we were talking with the guy and we're like, we could do this much a month.

He's like, no, you have to do this much. And it was only like, I don't know, like \$150 more a month. I'm like, I can't do that. And so we're talking back and forth and he's like, look, you know, it's not that much.

It's not that big of a deal. It's just \$150. I said, great. Then you're going to, you're going to agree to the deal. No. I mean, it's not much for you to pay that. He said, it was hilarious.

It wasn't a lot for me, but for him, it was like, you're taking food out of the mouth of my children. But I see that here with Ephraim when he's like, well, what's that between you and me? It's no big deal for you to pay this to me, Abraham.

[29 : 49] And so the world, the world hides greed behind its false words of generosity and consideration, doesn't it? We saw that in Acts this last week. The world, when they were in Philippi and the magistrates and all of those that went to them and accused Paul and Silas and they said, oh, they teach us things that are not lawful for Romans to know or believe.

You know, it's this false, this false morality or this false religiosity. And here you see this false generosity. The world hides its greed behind this idea of, oh, no, I'm being generous.

I'm helping you out. Ephraim, I think, had an understanding of who Abraham was. I don't know if he respected him as much as it might seem at face value until you realize this is the way that they would barter with each other.

And so he says it's 400, expecting Abraham to say what? I could do like two, 250, you know. What does Abraham say? Shockingly, to Ephraim, Abraham hearkened unto Ephron and Abraham weighed Ephron the silver which he had named in the audience of the sons of Hath, 400 shekels of silver, current money with the merchant and Ephron's going, I could have got 1,000.

This guy would have paid me anything. And then you wonder if he thought to himself, maybe I shouldn't have sold that. What'd I just do? Is that worth it? As Abraham weighs out this money.

[31 : 16] But you see, the prince of God, he knows that true value lies in one's character, not in one's possessions. Abraham said over in verse 9 that as much money as it's worth, he shall give it me for a possession.

I'll pay him whatever. They didn't believe him. They thought, well, okay, we know how this works.

Abraham was like, no, I don't do business that way. I'm a prince of God. I understand my position in this world.

I'm not going to do business like that. We have many opportunities in the world today to do business according to the way the world does it. Very easy to just do things on the sly or whatever. Not all of those necessarily are immoral from God's standpoint. We can't, we can't live by even, I'm careful I say this, we can't live by the laws of our country.

We have to live by the word of God. Now, that is going to align with what the Bible says in Romans and other places, Romans 13, what the purpose of government is for, to put down the wicked and to exalt righteousness.

[32 : 24] And anytime a law in our nation goes along with that, great, we're right there. But if a law came along and said, well, we're commanding everybody, like in China, you can only have one kid or whatever, so you're going to have to abort all these babies.

Well, no, I'm not going to because that's not what the word of God says. But, we can live in this world according to God's word and hopefully, we can also then align with what's going on in our country with laws and things like that.

But we have to know that true value doesn't lie in our possessions, which could be taken from us if we do not go along with the laws and rules and ideas of this world.

But it lies in being people of our word, people of truth, people of honor, people of the word. And you see how that worked out for Abraham. No one's trying to kill him here. They are actually recognizing that this man is a great man.

And generally, most of the time, if you live according to the word, people are going to recognize, wow, there's something about you. Because Jesus said that. He said, hey, they're going to know you.

[33 : 32] They're going to know by your works if you are of my father or not. Now, yes, the world's going to hate you. The world system ultimately is going to hate you. But there's going to be plenty of people that are also going to say, oh, wow, this guy, this girl, they're a prince of God among us.

There's something about them. And so Abraham was willing to keep his word, no matter the cost, to his pocketbook. And the field of Ephron, in verse 17, 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.

Do you remember where that word Mamre was before? This is where Abraham was sitting when those guys came to him, those guys, when the Lord and the two angels came to him before Sodom. He's sitting there. And Abraham, if you remember, said there was a tree there, the terebinth tree, I think. It's either a type of tree or a specific tree or grove. Abraham really seemed to like that place. And now he's come back there and he's buying this place. But what does he do? Does he just buy the field? Does he just buy rights to it? I mean, the cave, I'm sorry. What does he do? He buys what?

[34 : 49] The whole field, doesn't he? The prince of God buys the whole field. You know, we looked at a couple different ideas of what a prince is in scripture, examples, and we've been looking at it kind of like from the perspective of our own lives as children of God, as kings and priests of God, as princes of God, living in this world among the children of fear.

But we also saw where Jesus is the prince. He's our prince of peace. And Jesus, as the true prince of God, we are only princes of God. We are only lifted up in the sight of God because Christ was first raised up and we joined with him in his resurrection, right?

He's the true prince of God. In Matthew 13, verse 44, he gives a parable. He says, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden afield, the which when a man has found, he hides and for joy therefore goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

The prince of God bought the whole field for the one cave in it where he was going to put his dead. We're not going to stay there. And our prince bought the entire field for this one treasure, these few people in this room.

He looked at you and said, Oh, that's a prince with God. That's a princess with God. And he bought that whole field. He paid the whole price. Under, I found this quote, Under rabbinic law, if a workman came on a treasure in a field and lifted it out, it would belong to his master, the field's owner.

[36 : 16] But here the man is careful not to lift the treasure out until he's bought the field. Think of that. You know, the church is hidden in the Old Testament, isn't it?

And I think the Lord's like, mm-mm-mm-mm-mm, not till it's finished. I don't want to play my hand. I don't want to tip my hand. You know, the enemy, he didn't have a clue. He thought, I did it. I got him on the cross. And he's like, oh, shoot. Now there's like millions of Jesuses running around in this world. This is horrible. I just had one Jesus and 12 dumb apostles to deal with. Now Jesus is like, his life is somehow in all of these people and they're all running around the world. Now what am I going to do? Because our Jesus, our prince, he bought the whole field to get that treasure. So Abraham did that here. And all the borders round about, the end of verse 17, they were made sure.

Literally, they were deeded to Abraham. This wasn't just a handshake agreement. This was recorded. And unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth before all that went into the gate of the city did Abraham make this agreement.

[37 : 21] And so the prince of God, he makes decisions that are a blessing for future generations. This was made sure to Abraham in the presence of the children of Heth before all that went into the gate.

And it was for what? A possession to Abraham and his descendants. And so the choices he makes and decisions he makes today bless future generations. We have the same privilege that we can make decisions.

And I've been listening to this book, strange title, called Letters from Hell. It's kind of along the lines of Screwtape Letters. And it was written before that. And I think C.S. Lewis must have read it and influenced him.

Interesting book. Parts of it really good. Parts of it really kind of snooze. But it gives this perspective of someone who's supposedly in hell, not yet into the lake of fire and in writing from there.

And one of the things he says is he says, we don't realize the seed of our sin, the fruit it produces, continues long after we're dead and we still pay the results of it.

[38 : 23] And he gives examples of things like seemingly small things that he's responded to someone or whatever or led someone astray in an area that didn't seem very big and then how that just snowballed fruit after fruit after fruit after fruit.

But it's the same. We get the opposite of that. We get the blessing in Christ. Of the things that we do that are not wood, hay, and stubble but are their silver, gold, and precious jewels, they carry on into eternity and they continue to ripple and build and build and build.

So the things we do in faith, the things we do for Christ, the things we do as children and princes of God carries on long after the moment in ways we don't even know of.

And so the prince of God, he makes decisions that are blessings for future generations. And after this, Abraham, he did bury Sarah, his wife, in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre.

So remember we said Machpelah means a doubling or a portion. Mamre means strength. So in this place of strength, Abraham laid his dead to rest, recognizing what?

[39 : 33] Well, this was not the end, that there was another portion for them to come. And the same as Hebron in the land of Canaan, and the field and the cave that is therein were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place by the sons of Heth.

The prince of God stands on a sure foundation. That word made sure literally means to stand up or arise. It actually appears in verse 3, where Abraham stood up from before his dead. Verse 7, Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people.

And verse 17, where it says, which was before, was to stand before. And then, excuse me, verse 20, where it says that it was made sure.

No, I'm sorry, verse 17 is made sure. So the idea where it says, he stood up, he stood up, he stood up, is the same word used in verse 17 and verse 24. It was made sure. So it was made to, it could stand up under scrutiny.

It could stand up on its own two feet, essentially, this contract. And so the prince of God, he stands on a sure foundation. That foundation is what? It's the word of God. It's the contract we hold that was sealed in blood when Jesus said, when our prince said, it is finished.

[40 : 46] Isaiah 33, verse 5 and 6, the Lord is exalted for he dwells on high. He's filled Zion with judgment and righteousness and wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability, literally the foundation of your times.

Wisdom and knowledge shall be the foundation of your times and strength of salvation. The fear of the Lord is his treasure. That's our foundation. We stand on. Salvation, fear of the Lord and the

wisdom and knowledge of our God.

1 Corinthians 3, verse 11 says, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. There's only one foundation that the prince of God can stand on.

So Abraham, he has secured this burying place and we've seen how he lives among the children of fear, how the sons of fear.

The question is, how should then a prince of God live among the people of fear? Why? We kind of already answered that, didn't we? So we went through all these. We saw how Abraham lives. But Peter tells us in 2 Peter 3, he says, the Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness.

[41 : 51] We're in that time of history right now. But is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. So God is not holding up his promise in any way.

He just is long-suffering for the purpose of salvation. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

The earth also and the works that are in shall be burned up and be no more. That will happen. The Lord's not tarrying. He's just long-suffering.

So then Peter says this, So seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation, conduct, and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of the Lord?

Abraham, all these things are going to be dissolved. What type of person should you be? Isaac, this is the type of person we are. But Dad, I thought you said all this is ours.

[42 : 50] It is, son. It is. But it's not going to last. It's for a purpose. It's for a time. And we're going to use it to God's glory. But it's going to dissolve. So how should we live, then, in this world?

We are to live as the princes and people of God in this world of fear and terror. But John 12, 32 says this, Jesus said, And if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me.

In Christ, we have been lifted up above this world. But for what purpose? To live apart from it? Like, to not care? To like, yes, I am a great lord and prince in heaven or whatever, to live in pride?

No. That we might live for God in it. We have been lifted up by God above this world to live for God in this world. And then James, as we close, again, James 4, verse 10, humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up.

There's no other way to be exalted in God's sight. Do you want to be a prince of God? Then humble yourselves before him like Abraham did. Jesus, by the time he comes on the scene with the Pharisees, he's going to say, You guys think because you're the sons of Abraham that you have standing with God.

[44 : 15] You don't even know who Abraham was. Abraham was no Pharisee. He was a man who lived in humility and surrender. Philippians chapter 1, verses 27 to 29, I'll just read that.

It says, Let your conversation be as it becomes the gospel of Christ. That's that word again. Let your conduct, prince of God, those who live among the children of fear, let your conduct be as it becomes the gospel of Christ.

That whether I come and see you or else I'm absent, I may hear of your affairs that you stand fast. In one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

For unto you is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. So we have our code of conduct, we have our marching orders, and I think it's only stepping into that and realizing that, Lord, look what you've done for me.

Like we've said, what we have promised as followers of Christ, nowhere to lay our head and daily bread, and the Lord gives us so much more, right? The Lord has raised us up, but to what purpose?

[45 : 30] We don't have much time left, guys. Whether we go in the rapture or we have our own personal homecoming, we don't have much time left. And so how do we want to live? I don't think that means in your own flesh and effort, run out and grab everybody you can and shake them into the kingdom, right?

I don't think that's what that means. When someone says, if you knew Jesus was coming back tomorrow, what would you do different? I'd probably eat a lot of donuts and, you know, get really

excited he's coming. But if we're walking in the spirit and if we're in his word and we're living as the prince and people of God, I don't think we're going to change any way we're going to live.

I think it's just make sure that's what you're doing. Don't be distracted by the things that have no value in this world. But make sure that you live in humility before the Lord for the express purpose that he may lift you up so that you may then live as lights in this world.

So let's pray and do a couple songs and just sit with the Lord and how he's spoken to you. This is our chance to respond back to him. I know he's spoken to my heart.

So it's your chance to say yes. Scripture tells us to be doers and not hearers only. We can't all just run out right now and what God's put in our heart and go physically do that in a sense, but we can do it as we pray where the real work is done.

[46 : 46] We can come before the Lord and say, Lord, I want to ratify and say yes in my heart to what you've just spoken to me. And so, Lord, we're going to do that. We're going to sit with you as we close out and worship. And Lord, we're going to say yes and amen to everything you've spoken to our heart, Lord.

Thank you for this chapter in Genesis 23, Lord. This picture, Lord, of a man of faith, his wife passing off the scenes, someone he's been with for a hundred years, potentially, and Lord laying her to rest, recognizing that this world's not his home, that there's more to come, Lord.

And yet, wanting to do it well, wanting to finish well, wanting to be a good example in the world he lives in. And so, Lord, we want to be that. Lord, I want to, each one of these things we've looked at next to each verse, each application, Lord, I wish, I want to stick that against my life, Lord.

I want to be able to say that, yeah, I know where true value lies. I want to be able to say that I recognize that I need to be a man of my word. I want to have an effect in the people around me. Lord, I want to be able to see that the treasure, Lord, the treasure is worth the cost to gain that treasure. Lord, you gave up your life to buy the field, to buy the whole world to get this treasure, which is us.

[48 : 05] So, Lord, we want to give up our lives to gain that treasure, which is you. I love you, Lord. I need you. Would you prepare us in these last days to live as the prince and people of God.

In Jesus' name.