

Genesis 22 - The Akeidah; Final Reconfirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant; Return to Beersheba; Rebekah Born

II. Epilogue: Patriarchal history (Gen 11:10—50:26)

(1) Life of Abraham (Gen 11:10—25:11)

(B) Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:1—25:11)

(b) The maturation of Abraham and Sarah's faith in preparation for covenant blessings (Gen 18:1—22:19)

(vii) Offering of Isaac (22:1-19)

(c) Transition of covenant from Abraham to Isaac (Gen 22:20—25:11)

(i) Family of Nahor and the birth of Rebekah (22:20-24)

Genesis 22

(vii) Offering of Isaac (22:1-19)

1 Now it came about **after these things**, that God **tested** Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

1 Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

1 Sometime later, God tested Abraham. He called out to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am!" he answered.

1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

- "...after these things" - after the events of Isaac, Ishmael and Abimelech in Gen 21

— Verses 1-2 cover a gap of time of 30-31 years

- "...tested" - *nacah*, means to test or prove, as in determining the purity of a metal

— This is the only test from God in Scripture

— This was going to be Abraham's supreme test

— This is not a temptation to sin; God examined Abraham's heart (James 1:13-14)

— God tested Abraham's faith and his obedience; sometimes God doesn't test us to develop in us *great* faith but to develop in us *consistent* faith

- No test could have been more severe than the one God now imposed, and no obedience could have been more perfect than Abraham's
- This marks the eighth appearance of God to Abraham

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

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

2 God said, "Please take your son, your unique son whom you love—Isaac—and go to the land of Moriah. Offer him as a burnt offering there on one of the mountains that I will point out to you."

2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

- "...only" - Abraham had 8 sons from 3 different women

- This is an example of how the word "only" can be used in the Jewish concept. It does not necessarily emphasize origin, but can emphasize uniqueness, as here, since Isaac was not the only son Abraham had, but he was the only son of promise because Ishmael had been expelled. Therefore, from the viewpoint of uniqueness, Isaac was his only son.

- God considered Isaac to be Abraham's "only" son because God doesn't recognize things done by human effort (works). The whole issue with Hagar/Sarah and Ishmael was the result of Abraham trying to help God...God couldn't fulfill His own promise by himself, so Abraham felt the need to help Him.

- "...love" - 1st mention of "Love" in the Bible (Cf. John 3:16)

- God was asking Abraham to end the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant

- The command was given in such a way that a step by step increase of identification of Isaac made the test step by step more painful

- At this point of progressive revelation, God did not yet forbid human sacrifice; it was later prohibited by the Mosaic Law (Lev 18:21; 20:1-5; Deut 18:10)

- The land of Moriah is where Solomon would eventually build the first Jewish Temple (2 Chr 3:1)

3 So Abraham got up early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place of which God had told him.

3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

3 So Abraham got up early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his male servants with him, along with his son Isaac. He cut the wood for the burnt offering and set out to go to the place about which God had spoken to him.

3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

- Abraham immediately obeyed

4 On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance.

4 On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance.

4 On the third day he looked ahead and saw the place from a distance.

4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

- He had traveled 50-60 miles in three days

- Isaac was "dead" to Abraham from the time the commandment came: *three days in total...*

5 Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the boy will go over there; and we will worship and return to you."

5 Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you."

5 Abraham ordered his two servants, "Both of you are to stay here with the donkey. Now as for the youth and me, we'll go up there, we'll worship, and then we'll return to you."

5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

- The last phrase shows Abraham's faith in that he says both he and Isaac ("we'll return" [ISV]) would return to the two servants, who waited at the bottom of the hill

— What Abraham believed was that God had the power to resurrect Isaac to fulfill His covenantal promises (Heb 11:17-19)

— The basis for Abraham's faith was the promise of God in 21:12 when God said, "In Isaac will your seed be called"

— Thus far, Isaac had not produced a seed, so for God to fulfill His promise if Abraham sacrificed Isaac, God would have to resurrect Isaac back to life

6 And Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them **walked on together**.

6 Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together.

6 Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac.

Abraham carried the fire and the knife. And so the two of them went on together.

6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

- Isaac carried the wood, which Abraham knew would be the thing upon which Isaac would die, just as later, Jesus would carry the Cross upon which He was going to die

- Isaac was not a child: possibly 30 years of age!... you will see why shortly

- "...walked on together" - both in agreement. An image of the Son who said "Father...not my will, but yours be done" - Luke 22:42

7 Isaac spoke to his father Abraham and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

7 Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

7 Isaac addressed his father Abraham: "My father!" "I'm here, my son," Abraham replied. Isaac asked, "The fire and the wood are here, but where's the lamb for the burnt offering?"

7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

8 Abraham said, "God will provide for **Himself** the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

8 Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

8 Abraham answered, "God will provide himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."

The two of them went on together

8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

- "...Himself" - *yireh-lo*, which allows for two options: (1) God will provide *for* Himself, or (2) God will provide *Himself* as an offering. Either way, it was a divine provision.

Faith lives by promises, not explanations.

9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood, and **bound** his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

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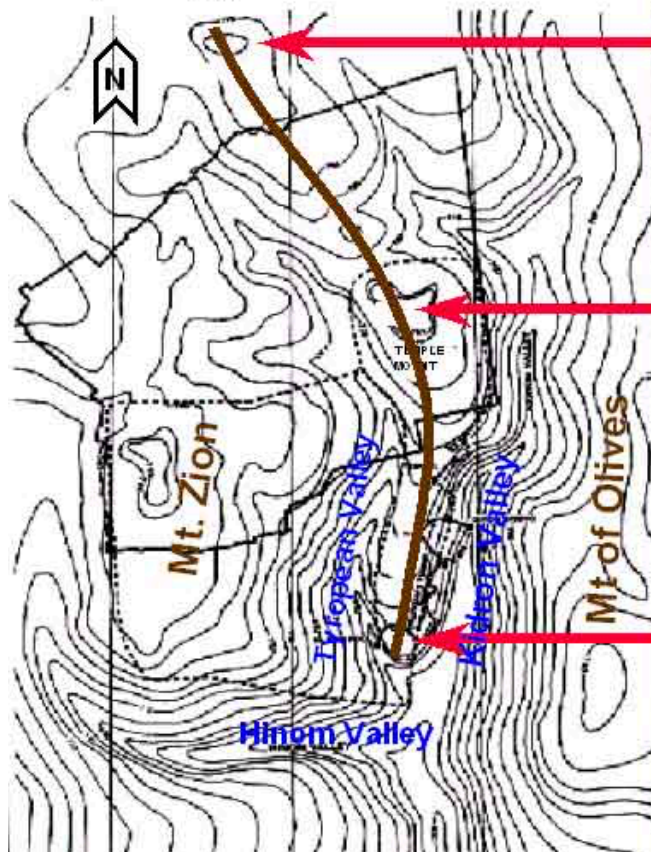
9 and came to the place about which God had spoken. Abraham built an altar there, arranged the wood, tied up his son Isaac, and placed him on the altar on top of the wood.

9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

- "...bound" - *akeidah*, the "binding" of Isaac

- Isaac was not a child, but a full-grown adult; he would have had enough strength to resist what his father was doing to him. However, Isaac submitted to what his father was doing and obviously trusted him.

Topology of Mount Moriah

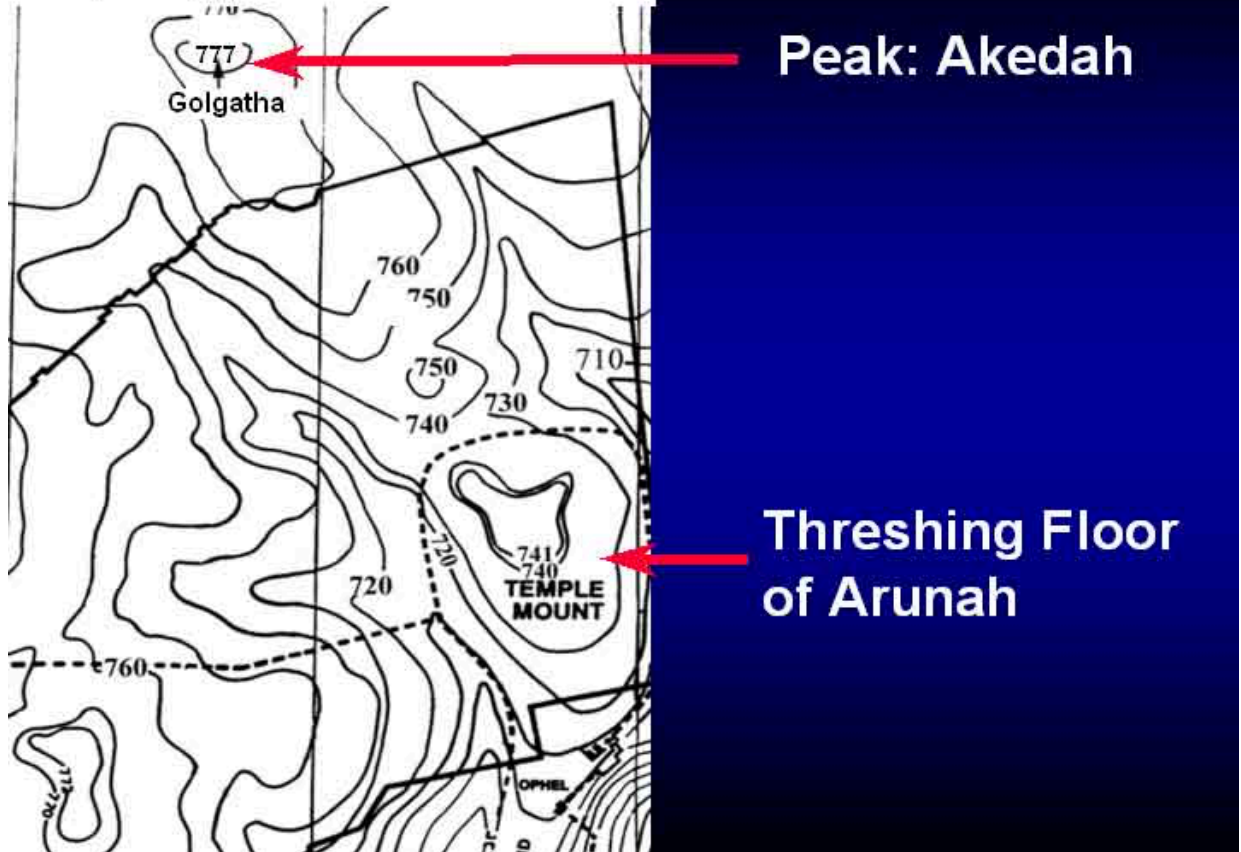


Peak: Akedah

Threshing Floor
of Arunah

Salem (Ophel)

Topology of Mount Moriah



2000 years later, on that very spot, another Father would sacrifice His "only begotten" Son...

10 And Abraham reached out with his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.

10 Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

10 Then he stretched out his hand and grabbed the knife to slaughter his son.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

- A true worshiper of God holds nothing back from God but obediently gives Him what He asks, trusting that He will provide (Cf. 1 John 4:18)

11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "**Abraham, Abraham!**" And he said, "**Here I am.**"

11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

11 Just then, an angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven and said, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he answered.

11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

- "...Abraham, Abraham!" - the doubling of a person's name makes the call emphatic
- "...Here I am" - *hinneni*, the only word Abraham utters to God in this scene
- Although Abraham has not always been faithful, the repetition shows that in the climactic test of his faith he is attentive and receptive to God's Word (Cf. Is 6:8)
- This marks the ninth appearance of God to Abraham

12 He said, "Do not reach out your hand against the boy, and do not do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

12 He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

12 "Don't lay your hand on the youth!" he said. "Don't do anything to him, because I've just demonstrated that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only unique one, from me."

12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

- Abraham did not withhold his son, and was physically and mentally prepared to offer him as a sacrifice, just as God had commanded. He "passed the test."

— Similarly Paul wrote that God "did not spare (*epheisato*) His own Son, but gave [delivered] Him up for us all" (Rom 8:32)

— A form of the same Greek word is used of Abraham in the Septuagint: "Thou hast not spared (*epheiso*) thy beloved son" (Gen 22:12)

— God already knew that Abraham feared God, but now it is known by experience. Abraham's faith was vindicated by his works; his act of faith was the evidence of salvation he was already declared to have had in 15:6. This same point is made in James 2:22-24.

God never wanted Isaac's life, He wanted Abraham's heart.

13 Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind *him* was a **ram** caught in the thicket by its horns; and Abraham went and took the **ram** and offered it up as a burnt offering in the place of his son.

13 Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind *him* a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son.

13 Then Abraham looked up and behind him to see a ram caught by its horns in the thicket. So Abraham went over, grabbed the ram, and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son.

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

- The idea of "substitutionary atonement" is introduced

— Abraham understood the ram to be the substitute for Isaac; the ram died in Isaac's place

- "...ram" [2x] - different from what Abraham told Isaac in v8 ("God will provide himself a **lamb**") (Cf. John 1:29)

— A ram is a male animal

14 And Abraham named that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

14 Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the LORD it will be provided."

14 Abraham named that place, "The LORD Will Provide," as it is told this day, "On the LORD's mountain, he will provide."

14 And Abraham called the name of that place **Jehovahjireh**: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

- "...Jehovahjireh" [KJV] - The LORD Will Provide

— The name is only relevant in a prophetic perspective! Abraham knew he was acting out a prophetic ritual.

Three Lessons of Faith from the Akeidah

- Faith obeys completely and emphatically God's Word
- Faith surrenders the best to God holding nothing back
- Faith waits on the Lord to provide for all needs

Five Contrasts Between Gen 21-22

(1) There is a crisis in 21:10 created as a result of a human directive in that Sarah told Abraham to cast out Hagar and Ishmael. In contrast, in 22:2, a crisis was created as a result of a divine directive when God told Abraham to offer Isaac.

(2) In 21:11, Abraham showed a real reluctance to follow through with Hagar and Ishmael, but in 22:3-10, Abraham showed no reluctance to follow through with Isaac.

(3) There is a contrast in God's identification of the two sons of Abraham. In 21:13, Ishmael is identified as Abraham's seed, and in 22:2, Isaac is identified as Abraham's son.

(4) The response of the two parents is contrasted. In 21:15-16, Hagar could not stand to watch her son die; but in 22:10, Abraham did not shrink from killing his son.

(5) The place of the two crises. In 21:14, Hagar and Ishmael were cast into the wilderness of Beersheba; and in 22:2-4, Abraham's trial with Isaac occurred in the land of Moriah.

15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven,
15 Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven,
15 The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven
15 And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,
- This is the fifth (and final) reaffirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant
- This is the second appearance of the Angel of Jehovah in this incident, and the tenth appearance of God in total to Abraham

16 and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,
16 and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,
16 and said, "I have taken an oath to swear by myself," declares the LORD, "that since you have carried this out and have not withheld your only unique son,
16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:
- Swearing upon Himself is the most solemn oath God can make
— It is also used in Is 45:23; Jer 22:5; 49:13; 51:14; Amos 6:8; Heb 6:13-14)

17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your **seed** as the stars of the heavens and as the sand, which is on the seashore; and your **seed** shall possess the gate of **their** enemies.

17 indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.

17 I will certainly bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in heaven and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the gates of their enemies.

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

- God again confirmed His covenant with Abraham (Cf. 15:5,18-21; 17:3-8)

- His descendants would be:

— Numerous like the stars (Cf. 15:5; 26:4)

— Like the sand on the seashore (Cf. 32:12)

— "like the dust of the earth" (Cf. 13:16; 28:14)

- God then added another element: Abraham's descendants would be victorious over the cities of their Canaanite enemies; this was done by Joshua in the Conquest of Canaan

- "...seed" [2x] - *zera*, refers both to Isaac and also the Messiah; it is a collective singular that can refer to one or many descendants (i.e. offspring, sheep; Cf. Gal 3:16)
- *zera* denotes all of the descendants of an ancestor, but isn't normally used of one person. When it is, such as this case, it points to the person as in some way outstanding; not one descendant among many, but *the* descendant.
- "...their" - plural; an apparent mistranslation (should be singular?) based on a comparison with Gal 3:16
- Also translated as plural "their" in NIV, NKJV, NLT, CSB, NET, NASB, RSV
- Translated as singular "his" in KJV, ASV, ESV, YLT, DBY, WEB, HNV

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

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

18 Furthermore, through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed my command."

18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

- "...all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" - this is God's promise to Abraham that assumes Gentile salvation

As the final reaffirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant, we can now view it as a whole. The Covenant plays a role after Genesis in history and in prophecy:

- In Ex 2:22-25, it was the basis for the deliverance from the Egyptian Bondage
- In Ex 4:24-26, it was the reason Moses almost lost his life
- In Ex 6:2-8, it became the basis for the Exodus
- In Ex 32:11-14, it became the basis for Moses' pleading for God to avert His wrath
- In Lev 26:40-42, it is the basis for Israel's final restoration
- In Deut 34:4, it was the basis for receiving the Land
- In 2 Kings 13:22-23, it was the basis for Jewish survival in spite of disobedience
- In 1 Chr 16:15-19, it was the basis for giving the Land
- In 2 Chr 20:7-8, it was the basis for giving the Land
- In Neh 9:7-8, it was the basis for the Exodus (v9-11), the Wilderness Wanderings (v12-22), and the entrance into the Land (v23-25) in spite of many acts of disobedience
- In Ps 105:7-12, it was the basis of the Exodus
- In Luke 1:54-55, it was the basis for Messiah's coming
- In Luke 1:68-73, it is the basis of the Messianic redemption of Israel

- In Gal 3:15-18, in contrast to the Mosaic Covenant, which was temporary, the Abrahamic Covenant is eternal
- In Heb 6:13-20, it is the basis for the assurance of salvation
- In Matt 22:23-33, along with its parallel passages in Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40, it is the basis for the resurrection of the OT saints; and for this reason many will come in the kingdom to dine with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt 8:11-12; Luke 13:29-30)
- In Acts 26:6-8, the Abrahamic Covenant serves as the basis for the resurrection

19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they got up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham lived in Beersheba.

19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham lived at Beersheba.

19 After this, Abraham returned to his servants and they set out together for Beer-sheba, where Abraham settled.

19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

- Abraham returned to his servants, and they returned to Beersheba

(c) Transition of covenant from Abraham to Isaac (Gen 22:20—25:11)

(i) Family of Nahor and the birth of Rebekah (22:20-24)

20 Now it came about after these things, that Abraham was told, saying, "Behold, Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor:

20 Now it came about after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, "Behold, Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor:

20 Now after these things somebody told Abraham, "Look, Milcah has given birth to sons for your brother Nahor.

20 And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor;

- After Abraham's testing by God, he receives a message from home (Ur of the Chaldees)

— Reports came from the East that the family of Nahor, Abraham's brother (Cf. 11:27-29), was expanding

— This passage is here to set the stage for Gen 24, when Isaac finds a wife

21 **Uz** his firstborn, **Buz** his brother, **Kemuel** (the father of Aram),

21 Uz his firstborn and Buz his brother and Kemuel the father of Aram

21 Uz is his firstborn, Buz is his brother, and Kemuel is the father of Aram,

21 Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram,

- "Uz" - also found in 10:23; 36:28

- The place where he settled and founded became the home of Job (Job 1:1); the land of Uz is also mentioned in Jer 25:20
- "...Buz" - his name is found in Jer 25:20, and the territory by that name was the home of Elihu (Job 32:2,5)
- "...Kemuel" - the father of Aram; Aram was Nahor's grandson
- The name is also found in 10:22

22 **Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel**—

22 and Chesed and Hazo and Pildash and Jidlaph and Bethuel."

22 Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel."

22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

- "Chesed" - the ancestor of the Kassdin of Chaldeans; mentioned in Job 1:17

- "...Hazo" - settled in Northern Arabia

23 and *it was* **Bethuel** *who* fathered Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

23 Bethuel became the father of Rebekah; these eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

23 Bethuel fathered Rebekah. Milcah bore these eight sons to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

23 And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

- "...Bethuel" - the father of Laban, Rebekah's brother

24 His concubine, whose name was **Reumah**, also gave birth to **Tebah**, Gaham, Tahash, and **Maacah**.

24 His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah and Gaham and Tahash and Maacah.

24 Also, his concubine Reumah gave birth to Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

- "...Reumah" - Nahor's concubine, who gave birth to four sons:

- "...Tebah" - mentioned in 2 Sam 8:8; 1 Chr 18:8

- "...Maachah" - father of the Maacathites (Deut 3:14; Joshua 12:5; 2 Sam 10:6,8; 1 Chr 19:6)

— The Maacathites settled in Southern Syria