

## 7.5.23 pm

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Date: 07 May 2023

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[ 0 : 00 ] Good evening, a warm welcome to the service tonight. Just by way of intimation, one correction that I received from this morning, I intimated that the Gaelic playgroup would be on on Thursday morning, and apparently this week it's not.

So young mums, dads, whoever, who attends that, you can maybe make note of that. Let's worship God, let's sing to his praise. We sing from Psalm 73 and from verses 23 to 24, two stanzas. Psalm 73 verses 23 and 24. These two verses of Psalm 73, that's verses 23 and 24, we sing to God's praise in Gaelic, and then after that, John McSween will lead us in prayer in Gaelic, please. Programmer supervisor Today Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 2 : 24 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 4 : 54 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 7 : 24 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 9 : 54 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 12 : 24 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 14 : 54 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 17 : 24 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 19 : 54 ] Genesis Genesis 2.

Sarah.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 22 : 54 ] And themes1 Today I will and heart doth faint and fail but God doth fail me never for of my heart God is the strength and portion forever. Down to the end of the psalm. We'll stand to sing to God's praise.

Whom have I in the heavens I but thee O Lord our Lord and in the air whom I desire besides thee there is none my fresh and heart doth faint and fear but God doth fear me never for of my heart God is the strength and portion or strength for forever for

Fcom mer Then that a warring from the door Thou hast destroyed all But surely it is good for thee As I draw near to God In God I trust that all thy works I may declare abroad

Let's pray as we turn back to God's word Heavenly Father we thank you that we are able to say with the psalmist That it's good for us to draw near to God And we thank you that we are able to do that That even though we are sinners We thank you that we can ask for our sin to be removed from us And we have the promise that when our faith is in Jesus And his blood Our sins can be forgiven And we thank you that that enables us to draw near to you To come into the presence of the Holy God So minister to us Lord we pray As we confess our sin We ask that you would receive us in Christ And we pray that you would speak to us Through your word That you would help us to be alert Especially at the end of the day When we can be tired

And when we can be distracted We pray that you would Sharpen our minds And give us that sense of expectation That we would hear Your voice So help us Lord We pray those of us in the building Tonight we thank you for each other And the encouragement that we receive As we come together in your name And we pray for those who we can't see But who are watching in their homes That you would bless them That you would draw near to them And minister to them As we pray that you would minister to us here So hear our prayers Go before us we ask Help us For we ask these things in Jesus name Amen There are some places that we That we're taken Or we visit And we spend a lot of time there But We might After having spent a lot of time there Wonder why we went there in the first place And

[ 28 : 07 ] I was thinking back Forgive me for speaking of my childhood twice in one day But I was thinking back to when I was a wee boy Probably Nine Ten years old And Sometimes In fact Almost every week If I can remember rightly On a Saturday When my dad was studying in Aberdeen We'd be taken away Myself And my mum And my sisters And Maybe one or two other people Would Would go away To Visit various places Places of Historical interest At national trust sites Boys and girls How much fun does that sound to you?

It's kind of like a A primary school Trip Where you're told about the history of buildings And places But it wasn't on a Primary school day It was on a Saturday So you'd wander around these places And you'd be asked to put headphones on You'd be given a wee Tour of it And And shown all All these interesting things But the truth was At ten years old I didn't find These things really interesting at all And As we were Heading back home In the car After having We would always buy a souvenir Teaspoon From the craft shop And would give it to my dad And I could I could see as he would receive this Souvenir teaspoon I could see in his face He'd always say thank you But really what his face was saying I don't know What kind of joy You expect me to find From this So As we went home In the car After me having missed The whole day of football I'd be thinking Why did we have to go there In the first place?

And having read Genesis 23 We might wonder Why did we have to go To Genesis 23?

Why is there a chapter Where we're given In the main part of the chapter The details Of a deal That Abraham is working out With some people Called the Hittites In order to find A place For his wife Sarah To be To be buried Because the main part Of the chapter Is the detail Of the deal And in some ways When we contrast This chapter Genesis 23 With the previous chapter Where we see Abraham being asked To sacrifice Isaac And that whole story And we can see That That chapter Genesis 22 It's just part Of the significance That takes us To Jesus We see all these lessons In Genesis Chapter 22 But when we come To Genesis 23 We might be wondering What are we supposed To learn here?

You know What lessons In discipleship Are we supposed To take From Genesis 23? And for tonight We've got three Lessons That we can draw From this chapter The first one is God's people Still have to go Through hard times It's the first thing That we see The second thing We'll see Is that God's people Are aliens And strangers In this world We're seeing that In Genesis We're also seeing that In 1 Peter And the last thing That we see In this chapter Is that God's promises They're trustworthy And we actually see them In this chapter Just beginning to come true So first of all God's people Still go through Hard times Look at verses 1 And 2 It tells us there That Sarah lived To be 127 years old She died at Kiriatharba That is Hebron In the land of Canaan

[ 31 : 48 ] And Abraham went To mourn for Sarah And to weep Over her Now through the ages And still today You know You can switch on Don't do it But you could switch on Channels On the TV God TV Type channels And there will be False teachers Who tell you That if you follow God Everything in your life Will be fine You'll be healthy You'll be wealthy You'll be happy That's the message That they try and sell As they ask you For a donation For their ministry And it's lies It's not the teaching Of the Bible It's a false teaching God's people Still Have to go through Hard times That's the teaching Of the Bible And ever since Genesis 3 When sin came in We see the world

Starting to decay And there's suffering And we see very quickly Death And God's people They were not And they are not Immune to these things And so here we see Abraham And he's having to To endure One of the The hardest things Imaginable He loses his wife She dies at 127 years old And interestingly That's the only place In the Bible That we're told The age Of a woman When she dies It's It's one little thing That points us To the The value The significance The weight That was given To Sarah As a character She's held up Hebrews 11 Isn't it In the hall Of faith

As one who was Faithful In following God And we saw that In First Peter This morning As well She's used As an example In discipleship And When we were Going through that This morning We If we weren't In Genesis We might Not have given Too much thought To that Sarah She's an example Of Of a great Godly wife And That's the truth She is But having Read what we've read Over the last few Weeks And Knowing what we know When we think about Abraham and Sarah We might think Well there's quite a lot Of things in their lives That That they They really shouldn't Have done They stray They fall They fail And yet They're held up As an example Of those who Are disciples And Matthew Henry When he's Making a comment On that I can't remember Was it in Peter or Genesis I was reading But He says

Sarah's Infidelity And Derision Remember when she Laughed When she was Told of God's promise And her Infidelity At times When she Doubted Sarah's Infidelity And derision Are overlooked And her Virtues Are celebrated That's in In 1 Peter And I thought As I was reading That that's such A good illustration Of the grace Of God Think about The fact that Our God He is forgiven And we all Fall And we all Fail And we're all Guilty of Infidelity At times We're all Those who Are prone To wander And we Remember that And the devil Loves to throw That at us But when we Confess our sin Our sins Are forgiven And God Remembers Our sins No more So in the Distance between Genesis And Hebrews

We have a Record of Sarah And there's No note Of her sin But there's A clear Record Of the Occasions When she Is faithful She is an Example And all the Works are Recorded for us To encourage us As well But she's an Example of One who Followed God Faithfully Not perfectly But faithfully Right to the End And here We see Abraham As a man Who has Lost his Wife And he Mourns for Her He Weeps for Her Warren Wearsby The commentator Says Even Even Jesus Wept John 11 Grieving Is one Of God's Gifts To help Heal Broken Hearts When people We love Are taken From us In death Paul did

[ 36 : 52 ] Not tell The Thessalonian Christians Not to Weep He cautioned Them not To sorrow As others Who have No hope And so We see Abraham And he's Going through A hard Time Abraham Feels That real Cutting Sorrow Abraham Has to Deal With the Painful Details Of Organising His wife's Burial And the Point to Note Here Is that God Sees All This This Is Recorded In Genesis 23 Because God Wants us To know That he Sees Abraham And he Sees us When we're Going through Hard times And all of us Go through Hard times To different Degrees And the Point To take For our Encouragement

Is that God is With us Just as he Was with Abraham When he And when We go Through Hard times It can Be death And the Grief The Mourning That we Suffer It can Be anxiety Sometimes in Our lives That overwhelms Us for a Season It can It can be It can be A depression Where we Sink Into A pit That we Feel like We can Just never Get out Of It can Be Breakdown In Relationships It

can Be Disappointments There There are Hard Things In this World That God's People Still have To go Through And so We see Abraham Here And he's Weeping And he's Sorrowing And God Is there To comfort Him And God Sees Abraham In the Midst of Planning the Burial And he's With him And we Need to Know that The devil Would love To tell Us That God Is not With us When times Are hard The devil Will sometimes Try to Tell us That God Is sending Hard times Our way To punish Us But what God is Telling us In Genesis 23 Is that Hard times Are not Punishment They are Not a Season Where he Has abandoned Us Rather he Is with Us And he Will sustain Us And he Will help Us In these Difficult Seasons As he Did to Abraham Remember Isaiah 43 It's such A well Known But it's Such an Encouraging Passage When God Says to Isaiah When you Pass Through the Waters As you Will I will Be with You And when You pass Through the Rivers They will Not sweep Over you And when You walk Through the Fire You will Not be Burned The flames Will not Set you Ablaze For I Am the Lord Your God The Holy One Of Israel Your Savior So that's The first Point to Know God's People Still go Through Hard Times But he Is With Them He Is With Us In the Midst Of These Hard Times The second Thing to See here Is that God's People We are Aliens And we Are Strangers In this World And I Think we Should pay Particular Notice To this Because We're Hearing This Both From Peter In First Peter Chapter Two Was it And also We're Hearing It In Genesis 23 I Didn't Plan This I Wasn't Even Conscious Really Of The Double Emphasis But we Can't Not Notice This As we Come To These Two Passages At The Same Time We Are Aliens And we Are Strangers In This World Look at Verses Three To Six Then Abraham Rose From Beside His Dead Wife And Spoke To The Hittites He Said I Am An Alien And A Stranger Among You Sell Me Some Property For A Burial Side So I Can Bury My Dead The Hittites Replied To Abraham Sir Listen To Us You're A Mighty Prince Among Us Bury Your Dead In The Choicest Of Our Tombs None So We Go On Into The Details Of The Arrangement But It Might Surprise Us Actually As We Look Into This It Might Surprise Us To See Just How Unprepared Abraham Is For This Event His

[ 41 : 54 ] Wife Is Is 127 Years Old When She Dies It Seems That Abraham Is Absolutely Unprepared For Where She Will Be Buried Now My Guess Is That Most People Over A Certain Age Have Given Some Thought To Where They Want To Be To Be Buried Most People When They Die Have Already Arranged For A Place Where They Will Be Buried They They Have Bought A Lair They Know Where Their Remains Will Be Laid They Know The Site Of The Burial As To Their Family But Not Abraham And Sarah She Dies And We Don't Know Was It Expected Or Was It Sudden Was It Unexpected But There Seems To Be No Plan For

For Her Burial And And When She Dies We Would Expect To Read About Abraham Making Some Old Testament Phone Calls And Sending News Back To The Place Of Their Birth We Would Expect Abraham Maybe To Make Arrangements To Head Back To The Place Where They Were Born But That That That That That That That That Is God Has Called Abraham Genesis 12 To Leave The Place Of Their Birth To Follow Him And That's What He's Been Doing With Sarah Since Genesis 12 For For 53 Years Poor Sarah Who Probably Had All The Plans That We Have We Have Our Plans When We Think About Our Lives And What We Might Do And Where We Might Go And How We Might Spend Our Time And In Genesis 12 Abraham Receives This Word From God Sarah Is With Them And All Their Plans Went Out The Window And

For 53 Years She's Living Out Of A Suitcase She's She's Going In A Tent From One Place To The Next She's Taken Into Some Dangerous Situations That She Should Never Have Been Put In And Now When She Dies As They're Still Traveling Abraham Wants Sarah To Be Buried In The Place That He Presently Was In The Place That He Was Moving Through And It's Such A Strange Thing For Us Because Most Of Us Have Such A Strong Sense Of Home But Abraham Knows And Says So Much In Verse 4 He Knows That His His Status And His Calling Is To Be An Alien And A Stranger In This World And So He Makes No Attempt To Travel Back To The Place That They Once Called Home

He Simply Buries Sarah Where They Were In Their Journey As They Follow The Lord And This Is An Illustration For Us This This World Is Not Our Home It's The Application For Us This World Is Not Our Home We Are Aliens And We Are Strangers Here So Yes We Form Relationships We Seek To Be Good Citizens And Good Wives And Good Husbands And We Seek To Be Diligent Employees And The Places That We Work We Seek To Care For The People Around Us And The Environment That We're In We We're In The World And We Enjoy The Blessings Of Being In This World But We're Always To Remember That This Is Not Our Home We're Aliens We're Strangers

We're Passing Through We have No Continuing City Here Boys And Girls Have You Ever Stayed In A Hotel Did You Enjoy It When You Were Staying In A Hotel A Night Or Two Maybe Tell Me How Many Of You When You Were Staying In A Hotel Brought Some Paint You Know And Paint Brushes And Wallpaper And Maybe Some New Carpets Because You Might Not Like The Decker In The Hotel When You Arrive There And Think I Would Like To Put My Own Touch On This I Think I Paint The Walls To My Color Scheme I Think I Put Down A New Carpet I Think I'll Change The Furniture In Here Have Any Of You Ever Done That Why Not Because You're Just There For A While Maybe A Night Maybe Two Nights It Would Be Silly To Spend All Your Money Making This Room Look Just Perfect And You're Only In It For A We Well And Then You're Gone And [ 46 : 58 ] That's A Bit Like This World You Know We Could Spend All Our Money And All Our Energy On On Trying To Get All The Kind Of Riches Of This World But We're Only Here For A We While And Then There's Forever Eternity And Jesus Has Said If We Will Trust Him He Will Prepare For Us A Home That Is Perfect And Abraham Is Heading For That Place That He Recognizes As Home Abraham He's Thinking About The Promises Of God Which He Knows He Won't Fully Enjoy In This World But He Believes In The Eternal God Abraham Is Looking To That Place Where He Will

No Longer Be Separated From Sarah And That's God's Promise For Those Of Us Who Are In Christ We Could Go To John 14 We're Not Going To Do That Just Now You Can Do It Your And We Have That Promise From Jesus Of That Eternal Home That Is Gifted To Us If We Are Trusting In Jesus As We Sang If Our Hope Is In Christ Alone So God's People We Are Aliens And We Are Strangers In This World God's People We Still Go Through Hard Times In This World And The Last Thing Is That God's Promise To Abraham It Was Starting To Come True Now Rewind For A Moment To Genesis 12 In Fact Go Back For A Moment Just To Genesis 12 In Your Bible If You Got It With You In Genesis 12

That's Where God Revealed Himself To Abraham And Started To Speak To Abraham And He Calls Abraham To Leave His Country His People His Father's Household And Go To The Land Says God Where I Will Show You And So Abraham Goes And At Verse 5 It Says He Took His Wife Sarah They Set Out For The Land Of Canaan Note That The Land Of Canaan And They Arrived There Abraham Traveled Through The Land As Far As The Site Of The Great Tree Of Moria Shechem At That Time The Canaanites Were In The Land The Lord Appeared To Abraham And Said To Your Offspring I Will Give This Land Canaan So That's God's Promise And Then Abraham He Follows God Through All These Years And All These Chapters That We've Been Reading And As We Come To This Chapter Genesis 23 We Ask The Question Where Is Abraham Now On His Journey And We Get The Answer In Verse 2 And We Get The Answer In Verse 19 And The Answer Is Abraham Is In Canaan Sarah Dies And Sarah More Importantly Is Buried In The Land That God Promised To Abraham And Soon We'll See That Abraham And His People Would Be Buried In This Land Canaan That God Had Promised To Them So One Of The Commentators Hale Says Abraham Legally Purchased A Small Field And Cave In A Land That Would Eventually Be Possessed By His Descendants This Particular Cave Became The Resting Place Not Only For Sarah

And Abraham But Also Of Isaac And Rebecca And Their Son Jacob With The Purchase Of This Field Abraham Gained As It Were A Toehold In The Promised Land Of Canaan And So What We See Even At This Stage Is That God's Promise Of Land That This Land Canaan It Was Beginning To Come True And So It's Just A Small Thing At This Stage But This Was A Token Of God's Faithfulness To His Word God Promised This Land Is The Land I Have For You And Your Descendants And Abraham As He's Burying His Wife Sarah He's Burying Her In This Land That God Had Promised And Yet Even Though God Promised This Land Abraham Still

[ 51 : 59 ] Had To Do Things Abraham Still Had To Act Abraham Had To Take God At His Word And That Involved Dealing With The People Who Currently Owned The Land So Verse 7 Abraham Rose Bowed Down Before The People Of The Land The Hittites He Said To Them If You Are Willing To Let Me Bury My Dead Then Listen To My Behal So He Will Sell Me The Cave Of Machpelah Which Belongs To Him And Is At The End Of This Field Ask Him To Sell It To Me For The Full Price As A Burial Site Among You So Abraham He Starts To Act On God's Promise In Order To Purchase To Get The Legal Title For This Land And Just Notice Here The Wisdom And The Patience Of Abraham Abraham Doesn't Go To The People Who Were In That Place And Say Listen I Was Given A Promise And This Land That You In Is Actually My Land God Promised

This To Me So Hand This Over That's Not How Abraham Deals With These People He's Respectful He is Gentle And He is Careful In His Dealings And Again That Makes Me Think Of First Peter In First Peter Chapter Three And Verse Fifteen We Who Are Christians Are Told Always Be Prepared To Give An Answer To Everyone Who Asks You To Give You To Give The Reason For The Hope That You Have But Do This With Gentleness And Respect And Abraham Here He Is Hoping God's Promise But He Is Gentle In His Dealings And He Is Respectful To The People That God Put In Front Of Him On That Day Then In Verses 10 Through To Verse 15 We We're We're Given The Details Of This Deal That Abraham Is Working Out The Spacially Ancient Peeling And Dealing This Is The Way That They Came To These Kind Of Arrangements Ephraim Wants The Best Price Although He's Pretending He Doesn't And He Puts This Mask Of Generosity On Towards Abraham He Basically Says To Abraham Don't Worry About I'll Give You The Field I Can't Expect You To Buy The Field You've Gone Through A Hard Time You Need To Bury Your Dead Don't Worry Don't Mention Anything I'll Give You The Field After All It's Only Worth 400 Shekels And He Drops The Price In There Because That's What He Wants And The Truth Was That The Field Was Actually Less It Was Worth Much Less Than 400 Shekels That Was A High Distortionately High Price But The Lord Is Not Short Of Cash And He Provided A Ram In Genesis 23 22 Sorry And He Can Provide The Cash For Abraham In This Chapter And That's Perhaps A Small Point In Application But It's One That's Worth Noting God Is Not Struggling To Meet Our Needs So Much Of Our Stress Is To Do With How Are We Going To Pay For This And Pay For That How Are We Going To Be Able To Make Provision In These Different Scenarios That We Encounter In Different Seasons Of Life We Can Threat About These Things But The Lord Knows What We Need And He Is Able To Provide What We Need In Fact He Promises That He Will Provide Not Always What We Want But Definitely What We Need And So We're To Trust Him On That Abraham He Agrees To Ephraim's Terms Verse 16 And We See The Outworkings Of The Deal In Verses 16 To 20 And We're Told That The Field And The Cave Verse 20 Were Deeded To Abraham By The Hittites As A Burial Site So Now Abraham He Has The Lawyer's Documents He Has The Title He Has The Deal All Fully Worked Out And Witnessed And He's Able To Bury Sarah And The Tomb Of Sarah Was An Ongoing Reminder To Abraham Of The Faithfulness Of God The Tomb Of Sarah In [ 57 : 03 ] The Place That God Promised To Give To The Descendants Of Abraham It Was A Continual Reminder That God Is A God Who Keeps His Promises And Tonight As We Finish The Tomb Is Still A Place That Speaks To Us Of The Power Of God's Promises And His Faithfulness To His Promises That We're Not Talking Here About Sarah's Tomb We're Thinking About Jesus That We Sang In The Hymn Of The Tomb That Was Empty It's Jesus Tomb That Speaks To Us About The Faithfulness Of God We We Can We Can See That The Record Of How Jesus Body Was Was Laid In That

Tomb His Dead Body Was Was Laid In The Tomb Of Joseph Of Arimathea Jesus Had Paid The Wages Of Our Sin With His Death But That Wasn't The End Of The Story Because On The Third Day The Stone Was Rolled Away And The Tomb Was Found To Be Empty And The Realization Hit The Woman First That Jesus Was Risen From The Dead Just As He Promised And So The Promise Of Resurrection Life The Promise Of Forgiveness Of Sin The Promise Of Eternal Life And An Eternal Home Came True In Jesus And The Empty Tomb Speaks To Us About The Fact That God's Promises Can Always Be Trusted God's Word Is Always True So There's Three Lessons From Genesis 23 God's People We Still Go Through Hard Times God God Is With Us In Them God's People We Are Aliens And Strangers In This World This Is Not Our Home And God Finally Is A God Whose Promises Are True And They Are Proved To Be True In Jesus In His Life In His Death And In His Resurrection So Let's Sing Now As We Close Mission Praise 52 We Sing About The Resurrection Of Jesus The Fact That He Lives God Sent His Son They Called Him Jesus He Came To Love Heal And Forgive He Lived And Died To Buy My Pardon An Empty Grave Is There To Prove My Saviour Lives A Sentence Son They Horted Jesus He Came To Love Heal And Forgive He Lived And Died To Buy My Pardon An Empty Grave Is There To Prove My Saviour Lives Because He Lives I Can Face Tomorrow Because He Lives All Fear Is Come Because I Know I Know He Owns The Future And Life Is Worth Living Just Because He Lives A Sweet To Own A New Born Baby And Feel The Pride And Joy He Gives But But Greater Still The God My Sure This Child Can Face Uncertain Days Because He Lives Because He Lives I Can Face Tomorrow Because He Lives All All Fear Is Gone Because I Know He

[ 62 : 04 ] Owns The Future And Life Is Worth Living Just Because He Lives And Then One Day I'll  
Cross The River I'll Find My Strife In The War With Fear And Then I'll Stay Gives Way To Victory I'll  
See The Lights Of Glory And I Know He Lives Because He Lives I Can Face Tomorrow Because  
He Lives All Fear Is Gone Because I Know I Know He Owns The Future And Life Is Worth  
Living Just Because He Lives And Now May The Grace Of Our Lord Jesus Christ The Love Of God  
The Father And The Fellowship Of God The Holy Spirit Be With Us All Now And Forever More  
Amen