

# 41 Hebron

## Names (also known as)

City of Arba, el-Khalil, Hebron, Kiriath-Arba, Kirjath Arba

## Etymology

Strong’s H2275 – seat of association; fellowship.

## Location/Description



Hebron is a town in the mountains of Judah 930 metres (3,050 feet) above the Mediterranean sea, and between Beersheba and Jerusalem, being about 32 kms (20 miles) from each.

## Scriptural references

### Old Testament

Gen. 13:18 is the first occurrence of the name. 9 of 71 occurrences of the name Hebron are of several Israelites.

## Famous characters

Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Leah, Caleb, Joshua, David

## Brief history

Hebron was originally named Kirjath-Arba (Gen 23:2; Josh 14:15; 15:13), signifying “the city of the four” i.e. the four giants – Anak and his 3 sons. A short distance to the north is Mamre, named after Mamre the Amorite (Gen. 13:18; 35:27), which is now called el-Khalil (“the friend”).

Hebron has a long and rich Jewish history. It was one of the early places where Abraham resided after his arrival in Canaan.

Among those who lived there were the Canaanites and the Anakims (Gen. 23:2; Josh 14:15; 15:13). Abraham (Gen. 13:18), Isaac and Jacob (Gen. 35:27). Sarah was buried here (Gen. 23:17-20).

King David was anointed in Hebron, where he reigned for seven years and made it his royal residence (2 Sam. 2:1-4; 5:5; 1 Kings 2:11), as did Absalom (2 Sam. 15:10). Joshua and Caleb took Hebron (Josh. 10:36-37; 12:10; 14:14).

One thousand years later the Romans also captured and destroyed it. During the first Jewish revolt against the Romans, the city was the scene of extensive fighting.

Jews lived in Hebron almost continuously throughout the Byzantine, Arab, Mameluke, and Ottoman periods. It was only in 1929 as a result of a murderous Arab pogrom in which 67 Jews were murdered and the remainder were forced to flee, that the city became temporarily “free” of Jews. After the 1967 Six-Day War, the Jewish community of Hebron was re-established. It has grown to include a range of religious and educational institutions.



## The cave of Machpelah

Genesis 23 records the purchase by Abraham of a plot of ground in Hebron for a burial cave for his wife Sarah. Abraham insisted on purchasing a plot of ground on the principle of Acts 7:5. The whole land was his inheritance, but he would have to wait for the Kingdom Age to receive it. Hence, he was willing to pay the considerable sum of 400 shekels of silver to Ephron the Hittite for a small plot to demonstrate that this possession was not from God. It was another act of faith by Abraham. Later Abraham himself, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Leah would be buried here to await the

resurrection and to receive the Land as their permanent inheritance.

Today, a Muslim mosque and a Jewish synagogue sit above what is said to be the cave of Machpelah in the same building separated by iron-barred windows. Portion of the 6 Orthodox tombs are located in each section.



place. If men seek to have fellowship with God, then the flesh must be “crucified with the affections and lusts” thereof (Gal. 5:24). The citadel of the 3 giants (human nature) in which we wrestle must be overthrown by the power God supplies – His word (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

Three giants stood in the way of Caleb obtaining his inheritance in the land of Canaan, and similarly three giants stand between all believers and an inheritance in the Kingdom of God. Only faith can prevail over them.

Fellowship with God is the outcome.

### Sources:

Bibleplaces.com

Crystallinks.com

New Unger’s Bible Dictionary

(Compilers – Darren Peeler/Jim Cowie)

## Herodian Construction

Herod the Great constructed a large edifice atop the traditional burial place of the patriarchs. Its architectural style is similar to that of Jerusalem’s Temple Mount, including the size of the stones (up to 24 feet long), the type of masonry (dry), and the pilasters (engaged columns), the last of which are no longer visible in Jerusalem.

## The significance of Hebron

Originally the stronghold of the Anakims, Kirjath-Arba (“city of the four”, i.e. giants) becomes a type of King Sin and his 3 agents – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of like (see chart below).

**The three giants – Judges 1:10**

- ❖ **Hebron** – association; fellowship.
- ❖ **Kirjath-arba** - city of the four (giants).
- ❖ **Sheshai** – whitish (like leprosy); six (Hitchcock) = **Lust of the flesh.**
- ❖ **Ahiman** - “my brother is a gift” = **Lust of the eyes.**
- ❖ **Talmai** – ridged; root meaning to accumulate; a bank or terrace = **Pride of life.**

**1 John 2:16** - “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...”

The change of name to Hebron signifying ‘fellowship’ reveals the true significance of this