

A PURPOSEFUL ACT OF FAITH ~ Genesis 23:1-20

→ Scripture Reading Ruth 1:15-18

THE DEATH OF SARAH ~ Genesis 23:1-4

[1] Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. [2] She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her. [3] Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, [4] "I am an alien and a stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead."

THE PURCHASE OF LAND ~ Genesis 23:5-15 (Ancient Near Eastern Bartering and Negotiations)

[5] The Hittites replied to Abraham, [6] "Sir, listen to us. You are a mighty prince among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead." [7] Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. [8] He said to them, "If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf [9] so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which belongs to him and is at the end of his field. Ask him to sell it to me for the full price as a burial site among you." [10] Ephron the Hittite was sitting among his people and he replied to Abraham in the hearing of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of his city. [11] "No, my lord," he said. "Listen to me; I give you the field, AND I give you the cave that is in it. I give it to you in the presence of my people. Bury your dead." [12] Again Abraham bowed down before the people of the land [13] and he said to Ephron in their hearing, "Listen to me, if you will. I will pay the price of the field. Accept it from me so I can bury my dead there." [14] Ephron answered Abraham, [15] "Listen to me, my lord; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver, but what is that between me and you? Bury your dead." [16] Abraham agreed to Ephron's terms and weighed out for him the price he had named in the hearing of the Hittites: four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weight current among the merchants.

THE BURIAL OF SARAH ~ Genesis 23:17-20

[17] So Ephron's field in Machpelah near Mamre--both the field and the cave in it, and all the trees within the borders of the field - was deeded [18] to Abraham as his property in the presence of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of the city. [19] Afterward Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre (which is at Hebron) in the land of Canaan. [20] So the field and the cave in it were DEEDED to Abraham by the Hittites as a burial site.

By purchasing a burial place in Canaan, Abraham showed his unswerving BELIEF in God's PROMISE that Canaan WAS his new homeland. NIV Notes

APPLICATION

SOME THEMES IN GENESIS:

- DEATH as a RESULT of sin
- The PROMISE of an ANSWER to sin
- FAITHFULNESS of God to sinful men

APPLICATION

Hebrews 11:13-15 (NIV) ...And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. [14] People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. [15] If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return.

This burial was the first sign of a PERMANENT transition... In burying Sarah in Canaan Abraham SEPARATED himself from his ancestral home where his relatives still lived. NLT Notes

Ruth 1:15-16 (NET) ... “Stop urging me to abandon you! For wherever you go, I will go. Wherever you live, I will live. Your people will become my people, and your God will become my God. [17] **Wherever you die, I will die - and THERE I WILL be BURIED.**

Philippians 3:7-9 (JBP) Yet every advantage that I had gained I considered LOST for Christ's sake. [8] Yes, and I look upon everything as loss compared with the overwhelming gain of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord. For his sake I did in actual fact suffer the loss of everything, but I considered it USELESS RUBBISH compared with being able to win Christ. [9] For now my place is IN HIM, and I am NOT dependent upon any of the self-achieved righteousness of the Law. God has GIVEN me that genuine righteousness which comes from **FAITH in Christ.**

Philippians 3:13-14 (HCS) ...But ONE THING I do: FORGETTING what is behind and REACHING forward to what is ahead, I PURSUE as my GOAL the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.

TAKE AWAY ??

In buying land for his dead Abraham declared that God's PROMISES do NOT END with this life.
NLT Notes

Hebrews 11:13, 16 (NIV) All these people were still living by faith WHEN they DIED. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and WELCOMED them from a DISTANCE. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. ...[16] Instead, they were longing for a better country - a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

The time of death should be the time when the godly PROCLAIM their FAITH LOUDLY in view of our HOPE in God's promises. Constable

Job 19:25-27 (NIV) I know that **MY Redeemer lives**, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. [26] And after my skin has been destroyed, yet **in my flesh I WILL SEE God**; [27] I myself will see him with my own eyes - I, and not another. **How my heart YEARNS within me!**