

Study Guide for Nov. 1st, 2009. Life of Abraham: Funeral Arrangements: Gen. 23.

Introduction: What has been your experience with making funeral arrangements?

I. Sarah's life and death. (Gen. 23:1-2)

1. Sarah was ____ at her death? (Of women in the Bible, only Sarah's age is noted)
2. What is Sarah commended for in . . . a) Is. 51: 1-2? . . . b) I Pet. 3:3-6?
3. What is Abraham's response? What has helped you learn how to mourn?

II. Acquiring a tomb. (Gen. 23:3-18)

A. Negotiations Round 1. (Gen. 23:3-6)

1. What does Abraham leave his mourning to do?
2. How does Ab refer to himself? As such Ab cannot buy or own land
3. How does the Hittite refer to Ab? What does he offer Ab instead of a sale?

B. Negotiations Round 2. (Gen. 23:7-11)

1. What does Ab's physical posture recorded here communicate?
2. How does Ab develop further his request in this cycle of negotiations?
3. Do you think Ephron is really being generous with Ab? Why or why not?

C. Negotiations Round 3. (Gen. 23:12-15)

1. Who does Ab specifically address? What does Ab offer?
2. How does Ephron respond to Ab's offer? Is Ephron greedy or generous?
3. What do you make of Ephron's appraisal that the land is worth 400 shekels?

D. Negotiations Concluded. (Gen. 23:16-18)

1. How does Ab respond to this final offer? Who witnesses the transaction?
2. What was the field in Machpelah near? (See Gen. 13:18, 14:13, 18:1)
3. What significance do you find in the fact that Ab now owns a piece of the land?

III. Sarah's burial and remembrance. (Gen. 23:19-20)

- A. How is Sarah referred to . . .during the negotiations? . . .at the beginning and end?
- B. How is the piece of property referred to . . .during the negotiations? . . .at the end?
- C. Note how this site is mentioned in Gen. 25:9-10; 49:29-32; & 50:13.

Conclusion: "Biblical faith is largely a matter of memory. Much of what the Bible demands can be comprised in one word: Remember." (Abraham Heschel) What aids has God given to strengthen your faith? Who are some people who modeled faith for you?