

Whenever a death takes place, we often stop and consider what the legacy of that person is. We take stock in an act of remembrance to summarise the character of the one who has passed away. In Genesis 23 we read of the 'mother of the nation' – the Hebrews – death. As we observe Abraham's response to his beloved partner's death, we see God continues to fulfil his promises in quite a remarkable way.

Please read Gen 22:20-24

1. What do you think is the purpose of this genealogy which is placed between the trial experienced by Abraham and Isaac and the death of Sarah? What does this genealogy display about the character of God? How does this genealogy impact God's program for his people?

Please read Genesis 23:1-15

2. Sarah was 127 years old when she died. How old were Abraham and Isaac? For how many years had Sarah been wandering in the land of Canaan? As you consider the life of Sarah summarise her triumphs of faith and her moments of faithlessness. Is there anything significant about the place where Sarah dies? What part of God's promises had Sarah not experienced? How does Hebrews 11:11 describe the legacy of Sarah?
3. What was Abraham's first response to Sarah's death? What was his second response and why is this so significant in terms of God's promise to him?
4. Abraham describes himself as a sojourner. What is a sojourner? (cf Heb. 11:9)  
In 1 Peter 2:11 believers in Jesus are also described as sojourners. How does this term relate to believers? How does being a sojourner relate to the truths of Eph 2:11-22? What are the signs in your life that mark out being a sojourner? How does being a sojourner relate to Col 3:1-4?

5. In verses 4, 9 and 20 in most English translations the Hebrew word *ahuzza* has been translated as 'property'. However, the same word in Gen 17:8 is translated as an 'eternal possession.' When we understand this word as possession how does that change Abraham's intentions to buy a cave of burial? How does this act understood in Hebrews 11:11-16? Why do you think Abraham pursued the purchase option, when the Hittites were happy to "give" him the cave?

Please read Genesis 23:16-20

6. What is the importance of witnesses to the transaction? Did Abraham pay a fair price for the land? Why did Abraham not haggle on price? What was included in the transaction?
7. How does this purchase reflect upon God's promises to Abraham? ( Gen 12:7; 13:15,17; 15:18; 17:8) What is the significance of this site? (Gen 49:28-33) If you were a Hebrew listening to this account for the first time how would it impact your understanding of God's promises to his people? As a follower of Christ how does God's eternal promise outlined in 2 Peter 3:13 and 1 Cor. 15:20-28, 50-58 determine and shape the way we live on this earth as sojourners?

Key questions to consider at the end of your study of God's word.

- a) What have we learned?
- b) How should we pray and change in response to what we've learned?
- c) Who can we prayerfully share what we've learned with and how?

