

A scroll of aged parchment with text centered on it. The scroll is unrolled, showing a light brown, textured surface. The text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The scroll is set against a white background.

Genesis 23:1-20

A rare chapter !

One of the consequences of studying through a book is – you can't avoid the hard stuff.

Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old.

Genesis 23:1

It's a long time – or is it ?



Psalm 90: 10, 12

She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan.

Genesis 23:2

The longest life must shortly come to a close. .. Those whom we most love, yea, even our own bodies, which we so care for, must soon become lumps of clay, and be buried out of sight.

Matthew Henry



2 certainties - taxes and death
The 3rd is God's grace.

and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

Genesis 23:2

Grieving his loss 1 verse - a private, personal matter



When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

John 11:33-37

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. 1Thessalonians 4:13



and provide for those who grieve in Zion-- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

Isaiah 61:3

The last enemy !

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

1Corinthians 15:55

Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, "I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead."

Genesis 23:3-4

Just passing through



Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

1 Peter 2: 11-12

Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, "I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead." Genesis 23:3-4

Funeral arrangements



The Hittites replied to Abraham, "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." Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. Genesis 23:5-7



Recognition and respect by both parties

Genesis 23:8-9 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 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."



The request
The owner
The site
The price

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. Genesis 23:10

The place of official business



"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." Genesis 23:11

Respect - Generous ? Negotiations ?



Again Abraham bowed down before the people of the land 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."

Genesis 23:12-13



Abraham was able to pay for the field, and therefore would not take advantage of Ephron's generosity. Honesty, as well as honour, forbids us to take advantage of our neighbour's liberality, and to impose upon those who give freely.

Ephron answered Abraham, "Listen to me, my lord; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver, but what is that between you and me? Bury your dead."

Genesis 23:14-15



In those days a hired man would not receive more than one shekel a month as wages .

The price was 40 years wages ! A good deal ?

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. Genesis 23:16

witnesses – fair and square

**PAID IN
FULL**



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 to Abraham as his property in the presence of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of the city.

Genesis 23:17-18



This is a deed of sale, such as was included in Hebrew contracts. Note the details:- “the field,” “the cave,” “all the trees,” “all the border,” “deeded,” “in the presence of,” “all that went in at the gate of his city.”

It now legally belongs to Abraham

Genesis 23:19-20 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. So the field and the cave in it were deeded to Abraham by the Hittites as a burial site.

DUPLICATE

This verse repeats and summarizes the transaction which for all subsequent ages symbolized to the Israelites their ancestral connection with, and sacred rights in, the land of Canaan.

Why is there so much emphasis on the purchase ?

It is Abraham's statement of faith in God's promise



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, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own.

Hebrews 11:13 - 14



A place not just to look back, but to look forward !