

The Book of Genesis

Chapter Twenty Three

The Death and Burial of Sarah

Lesson Verse: Psalm 116:15

I. Lesson Introduction

- A. How should people die?
- B. What happens to them when they die?
- C. How should their be “disposed of”?
- D. All of those questions are exposed when a person dies, and they are explained by how we treat our dead as believers!
- E. Pagans treat the human body very different than followers of the living God
 1. Communal eating the dead body
 2. Burning of the body – Bali and Sali – India, Hindu
 3. Burning of the family (or at least the wives) along with the dead body - the Egyptians, Greeks, Goths, and Scythians.
 4. Embalming
 5. Burial of all they treasured with them for the afterlife – Vikings, Egyptians
 6. Sky burial – the pulling apart of a dead body, and then left out in the open for birds and animals to feast on
 7. An today, people want to be buried in space, as ashes “spread across the Cosmos!”
 8. Without Christ, they all have NO HOPE of ever seeing their loved ones again! (Eph 2:12)

II. Lesson

A. The Death of Sarah (23:1,2)

1. Abraham mourned and wept for his wife’s death (Cf 1Thes 4:13-17)
2. The Bible doesn’t tell us what killed her, other than just old age – wearing out
3. But we KNOW that she died “_____” (Heb 11:10-13) – what a way to die!
4. She dies at _____ years old - The only woman ever given an age in the Bible
5. She had been following God alongside of her husband for at least _____ years!
6. She was one of the greatest women of the Bible! Greater than Mary I believe! In Hebrews 11, women are told to look to be like Sarah instead of like Mary!

B. The Purchase of Machpelah (23:3-16)

1. The sons of Heth – these were _____ (Gen 10:15)
2. Abraham has always been a stranger and a sojourner – pilgrim, traveller
3. He started out in Ur as wealthy and a very important person
4. Ever since he set out in obedience to God, he has not owned any land
5. Now he wants to purchase a piece of land to bury his dead. He knows that God already owned the land, and had given it to him, he still had to purchase it
6. Properness of burying the dead
 - a. Needs to be practical
 - b. Needs to be identifiable
 - c. Needs to be Christian – not pagan, or by cremation, etc
 - d. Needs to be temporary because one day uit will be emptied by the resurrection!
7. The Canaanites offer a place among THEIR dead (23:6)
8. Abraham wants a different place – he has his eye on a field, and a large cave in it – a sepulchre
 - a. Near Mamre, Hebron, and Kirjath-arba
 - b. Abraham has been here before (Gen 13:18)
9. Owned by Ephron the Hittite (Uriah was an Hittite too, 2Sam 11:6)
10. For the price of four hundred shekels of silver – not much money for property. The land was not worth that much to anybody but Abraham

C. Securing the Possession (23:17-20)

1. The land and even the trees were surveyed and accounted for
2. Everything was legal, and documented in transferring the title to Abraham
3. Sarah's body was placed in the cave
4. Abraham just was waiting for HIS body to be placed there as well

D. Sarah is Buried (23:19)

1. Properly wrapped to honour her – not just thrown into a pit of earth
2. Honoured by mourning
 - a. Sorrow for the loss of her companionship, wisdom, friendship, comfort, love, just her very presence!
 - b. You can't just try and ignore such loss
 - c. Mourning is okay and necessary – for a season
 - d. Overmuch sorrow can kill though!
3. Expectant of seeing her again
4. Expectant of a resurrection of this body

III. Conclusion