

JESUS IN GENESIS

SEASON 2

JESUS IN GENESIS - SEASON 2: GENESIS 23:1-20

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE - WEEK OF JUNE 27, 2021

Introduction:

- After this chapter, Scripture zooms in on the last day that Abraham and Sarah have together. It is a pivotal moment in Genesis where the focus of the text shifts from the blessings and promises of God being applied to the marriage of Abraham and Sarah to that of Isaac and Rebecca.
- As we approach this chapter, one should take time to ponder why so much attention (verses 3-20) is placed upon Abraham's efforts to purchase a burial plot.

Abraham's Sorrow (v1-3)

- Despite being recipients of God's special blessing, Abraham and Sarah are not immune to the curse applied to Adam and Eve as a result of their sin. All people, even God's children, will have to face death and the thorns and thistles of life (as listed in Genesis 3:16-19) until Christ's return.
- As a younger congregation, we have a bias toward youth and problems that younger individuals, couples and families face. We shouldn't turn a blind eye toward death and challenges that we will face in the later stages of life. We should prepare to face them in faith.
- Encountering death and processing it should bring grief to our heart, as it directs us to the power of sin that still remains in us and in God's creation, but it is also something that can bring much encouragement to us. Upon encountering death, one sees the reality of life and their position before God in their sin clearly. Christians and non-Christians should look to Christ to receive forgiveness of their sin while in such a valley of vision.
- In verses 1-3, we see Abraham process his sorrow and grief at the loss of Sarah in a healthy manner. He grieves as one who has hope in the resurrection (1 Thes. 4:13-14). After, appropriately, spending time next to Sarah to grieve, he, also appropriately, rises up to take care of her burial.
- Women and men should process grief and sorrow in the appointed seasons of life. If not processed or dealt with sufficiently, grief and sorrow will project themselves in unhealthy ways in the life of a person.
- We should check ourselves against overindulgence of grief by inviting in care and accountability during seasons that we experience it.

Abraham's Sojourn (v3-4)

- At this point in the narrative, Abraham is 137 years old and has been a sojourner, without a plot of land to call his own, for 62 years. This is significant to consider when we recall that God promised Abraham that He would give him the whole land of Canaan (Gen. 17:8, 15:18-21).
- Abraham's effort to get a burial plot in the land of Canaan shall be commended when one understands that he could have used this moment as an opportunity to go back to where his relatives live (who, according to Gen. 22:20-24, were thriving). Instead of falling back to his family as an opportunist, Abraham doubles down on his commitment to trust that God will fulfill all of His promises (Hebrews 11:10, 16) as he seeks to bury Sarah in Canaan.
- Like Abraham, all Christians are sojourners. We will not receive all of the blessings as God's adopted children in this life. We should be careful to not get too close to "the world" yet still engage it for God's glory during our sojourn (1 Peter 2:11-12; James 4:4-7).

Abraham's Slice (v3-20)

- Abraham models the nuanced way in which we should engage "the world" in daily life in his engagement with the Hittites. He gives respect and gets respect in the lengthy series of exchanges with them.
- It should be noted that the way the Hittites engaged Abraham was common custom. They were

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

To understand that our eternal, resurrected position in God's presence is guaranteed through our faith in Christ and reception of the Holy Spirit.

Heart

To trust that God's promises will come true even when present circumstances suggest otherwise.

Hands

As sojourners, to lead holy and hopeful lives as we engage death, "the world," and the thorns and thistles of life.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Kids' Summer Nights: Registration is now open for kids ages 4-11 to attend our free, weeklong VBS program this summer! You can register your child(ren) or sign up to volunteer [here](#).

The next **Baptism Seminar** will take place on July 11th. The meeting will be held after 2nd service, at ~1PM. Meet Pastor Andy at the Welcome Center at that time.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- engaging him in a way that was fitting for a respected alien in their land.
- It's difficult to know whether the price that Abraham paid was a good price; it's likely that it was a high price. What's important to note is that Abraham did get the burial plot and land. Acquiring this slice of land would have been a great source of assurance for Abraham that God was going to bless His promises to give his ancestors the land. This story would have been a great source of assurance to Moses' audience when they learned this before entering the Promised Land.
- Christians receive a similar deposit that all of God's promises in eternity, particularly for the resurrection of the dead and final judgement, will be fulfilled. We receive such a deposit in the form of the Holy Spirit when He comes into our lives and regenerates our heart (Ephesians 1:13-14).
- **Conclusion:**
- Heb 12:18, 22-24 elaborates on the position to which we have access through our faith in Christ in this life, which is the eternal presence of God in all of His majestic power and glory.

Read Genesis 23:1-20

1. Can someone take a minute to recall the three main sections of the sermon?
2. What have you learned while following the life of Sarah in this series?
3. What kind of thoughts come to your mind when you ponder the topic of death?
4. How can meditating upon death (or encountering it) be beneficial to a Christian's faith?
5. **Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14.** What does it mean that Christians "may not grieve as others do who have no hope"?
6. Have you lost beloved family members or friends? Looking back, how would you have received or asked for help from others differently while grieving?
7. What does it mean that all Christians are "sojourners" in this life?
8. How should our status as "sojourners" impact our outlook on this life?
9. Abraham received a slice of land, which served as a great source of assurance that God would follow through on His promise to give his descendants the land of Canaan. God gives Christians the Holy Spirit. How does the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life give you comfort when you ponder the inevitable challenges in life? When you ponder eternity?
10. What lessons from this sermon series have been most helpful to you in your faith?