

April 20/21, 2002

Study Questions
By Faith We Live: A Study of the Life of Abraham
Faith and Reality
Genesis 23:1-20

Opening Discussion

1. How would you define reality? Do you define it differently than those around you?
2. Think through what received your time and attention this past week. Of those things, what will really matter 100 years from now? Why?
3. Have you ever had someone promise you something, but never come through? What did you do eventually? Did you give up on the promise? Why?
4. Have you ever had a period of time when you didn't have a place to call home? What happened? How did you feel?

Bible Study

1. Read Genesis 23:1-20. Notice how the material is divided up. How much is spent on what?

Why is this? What is the writer's point in this chapter?

2. Go back and review all we know about Sarah from Genesis 12 on. Also, compare what is said about her in Isaiah 51:1-2, 1 Peter 3:3-6, and Hebrews 11:11.

What would you write about Sarah if you could summarize her story of faith?

3. Notice how Abraham describes himself in Genesis 23:4. What had he been promised by God in Genesis 12:7?

Now, 60 years later, Sarah dies and Abraham doesn't even have a piece of ground to bury her in. What would it be like to leave "civilization" behind and die, having never seen the promise fulfilled?

4. In what way was Abraham's purchase of a burial ground for Sarah a statement of faith?

Why was it so important that she be buried there, and not back in Ur?

5. What promises do we claim that we must take by faith—because we may not see them fulfilled in our lifetime?

What would be the alternative?

6. Why do most people live for the here and now?

How does faith factor in to how we live on a daily basis? How does faith determine the most ordinary decisions in our day?

Application

1. If you were to be completely honest, do you live each day for eternity... or do you live for the here and now?

What could you do to live more for what will matter 100 years from now?

2. What 3 practical things did Sarah teach you about faith?
3. Discuss what it would look like to be a person of faith on a daily basis. Then spend time praying for one another, asking God to make each of you a person of faith.