Genesis Chapter 23 Verses 1 – 2

* A couple of interesting data points…we ***know*** how old Sarah was when she died. That’s unique because the Bible records the age of death for **no other woman.** She is the only one. Also, another interesting and significant piece of information, there are two places in the Bible where we are told to ***look to Sarah as a godly example of a woman and a wife.*** Isaiah 51:1-2, and 1 Peter 3:3-6. That’s interesting and significant because **nowhere** in the Bible are we instructed to look to Mary, the mother of Jesus.
* And notice, this is the **first mention** of the word *“weep”* in the Bible as Abraham ***cries at the loss of his godly wife.*** Godliness will **certainly** lead to *great love, friendship, and strength of relationship* in your lives. It’s tragic that many husbands today and many wives today perhaps would not weep at the loss of their spouse. Why? Nothing to do with physical attraction. Nothing to do with monetary capacity. ***Everything to do with godliness.***
* A ***godly couple***, a couple that loves the Lord, knows the Lord and sets their hearts to wisdom and worship…and those two, just their relationship will be counsel on the hearts of others…***God honoring and God revealing***…but tonight, resentment towards him or towards her or resentment towards you...the Lord can help and heal you if you’ll let Him…
* And then if they *were* lost, **you’d weep.** Even if they never come around…2 Samuel Chapter 1, we find David weeping at the account of the death of Saul…***it’s amazing what godliness will do to a heart***…God allowed *to speak and to teach and to guide and to lead* in your heart of hearts…It’s not that He makes you like Him because He likes to clone Himself…it’s that as you see ***Him, learn Him, process who He is, how He is, what He is***…you see how wonderful He is and how unlike Him you are and there is a **normal natural expected process** that you begin to be clay in His hands to become more like Him because He is **so far superior** and the stand out quality of God is exceeding LOVE!
* It’s hard to be godly towards a spouse that is not…for sure! It’s terribly difficult to love and give yourself to someone who *at best* takes you for granted…that you know would not weep if you were lost…but you’re just going to have to take this by faith, ***even that path is eternally, universally and in every way better than being resentful yourself***…because God will meet you there…that’s where He is! In the secret space of sacrificial suffering…seek Him there! ***It will take your whole heart…and you WILL find Him!***

Genesis Chapter 23 Verses 3 – 13

* I want to **spotlight** something before we move on because we have read it twice. You’d think that Abraham is the *eldest* among the people. If Sarah is at the age of 127 then Abraham is 137 years old. And so he is probably an elder if not the eldest of the people. On top of that, they regard him as a *“mighty prince”* among them…and yet twice now we have read, before he responds to them or addresses them, ***he bows himself.***
* ***Abraham is a man that is reverent towards God and that makes him reverent towards men.*** And that’s just the way it is. It’s almost *counter-intuitive*, it’s something that must be caught because truly it cannot be academically taught…***if you desire to become great, become the servant of all.*** My how their hearts must have swelled for this great elder, **the wise among them**, the mighty prince in front of them when he offered deep respect and reverence even towards their youngest of citizens!
* Listen, you men of renown, you fathers, you women of great wisdom and you people of God, if you want to teach the younger generations respect and reverence, **then put it on display!** BUT, there is a big but in that statement…if there is disregard and disrespect in the *heart and eyes* of those citizens, *let your peace return to you*, Matthew 10:13 says, and *save the bread for the children* as Jesus said in Matthew 15. Notice this…
* Back in verse 3, Abraham simply stood up and spoke…then, the sons of Heth answered calling him *lord*, a *mighty prince*, and offered him his choice of their possession…it’s after this that they find reverence and respect expressed by Abraham. You young people or perhaps you aren’t so young and hate the fact that you get no respect at work…try calling him *“mighty prince”* (in today’s vernacular). **HA!**  Honor him or her from a heart of worship and reverence towards God and watch His ways be proven right…yet again.
* Romans 12 says, *“Give preference to one another, not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Rejoice in hope (not in instant gratification) and be patient in troubled days, continuing steadfastly in prayer…don’t set your mind on high things (becoming their equal or superior) but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”* How do you do all of those impossible things? Allow God to *speak and to teach and to guide and to lead* in your heart of hearts…***grow in godliness!***

Genesis Chapter 23 Verses 14 – 16

* This chapter makes a **big deal** about Abraham paying for this land…it could be that this is just *Middle Eastern negotiations*…but it also could be that ***Abraham wouldn’t bury his bride in a free tomb.*** She is **worth too much** to him. Most definitely, no birthday, Mother’s Day, Anniversary or Christmas went by in that household without Abraham hitting **Amazon!**
* I heard a funny story…Bill was in trouble. He forgot his wedding anniversary. His wife was really angry. She told him *"Tomorrow morning, I expect to find a gift in the driveway that goes from 0 to 200 in less than 6 seconds, AND IT BETTER BE THERE!!"*
* The next morning Bill got up early and left for work. When his wife woke up she looked out the window and sure enough there was a box gift-wrapped in the middle of the driveway. Confused, the wife put on her robe and ran out to the driveway, and brought the box back in the house. She opened it and found a **brand new bathroom scale.** *Bill has been missing since Friday. Please pray for him!* HA!!!
* She was his prize…there is no way that it could be free…***his love for her wasn’t satisfied until it cost him…***

Genesis Chapter 23 Verses 17 – 20

* This cave of the field of Machpelah will be where Isaac and Ishmael bury Abraham in about 30 years, where Isaac and Rebekah will both be buried, where Jacob will bury Leah and eventually where Joseph will bury Jacob…and so Abraham says ***goodbye*** to his best friend, to his family…but remember, this is *the friend of God*…and ***in the midst of great sorrow, there is great hope***…the next chapter we will cover Isaac finding and securing his bride…a picture a pointer to the work of Jesus on the cross of Calvary!