

Genesis 23:17-20

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Ephron's field and cave are deeded over to Abraham and become his property. This is witnessed by the sons of Heth. Abraham buries Sarah in the cave of the field at Machpelah.

This episode ends with a summary of what had occurred. Abraham now owned land in *Canaan*. After giving *Ephron* the Hittite four hundred shekels of silver, *Ephron's field, which was in Machpelah, which faced Mamre*, now belonged to Abraham. The property he purchased included *the field and the cave which was in it*. Apparently the *cave* was what Abraham mainly sought, to act as a grave. But he also got a *field* along with the *cave*. Abraham also acquired *all the trees which were in the field*. That the *trees* are mentioned as a part of the purchase price might indicate that property could be sold but ownership of the trees retained. In this case it was clear that Ephron would have no further claim to go in and cut down the trees. They came with the deal. The trees included were specifically those *that were within all the confines of its border*. These also *were deeded over to Abraham as a possession*.

This purchase was done in *the presence of the sons of Heth*, other Hittite men who were witness to the deal, *before all who entered the gate of his city*, which was the site of such transactions in the ancient world, or where judgements were made to settle disputes.

After this purchase, Abraham has a burial plot for his departed wife. He buried his wife Sarah in the cave of the field of Machpelah facing Mamre (that is, Hebron), in the land of Canaan.

That Abraham legally owned *the field and the cave* is repeated in the final verse, that the property was *deeded over to Abraham for a burial site by the sons of Heth*.

This repetition emphasizes the validity of the purchase. The purpose of this episode was to show that Abraham was finally a landowner in the Promised Land, and that his family would live and die and be buried there, a sign of dedicated trust in God's promises ([Genesis 12:7](#), [Gen. 15:18-21](#)).

Biblical Text:

17 So Ephron's field, which was in Machpelah, which faced Mamre, the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees which were in the field, that were within all the confines of its border, were deeded over 18 to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who entered the gate of his city. 19 After this, Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave of the field of Machpelah facing Mamre (that is, Hebron), in the land of Canaan. 20 So the field and the cave that was in it were deeded over to Abraham for a burial site by the sons of Heth.