

Genesis 23:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan.

Analysis

And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: th... This passage is part of the Abrahamic narratives which shift from universal human history to God's particular covenant people. The Abraham cycle (Genesis 12-25) demonstrates God's sovereign election, covenant faithfulness, and the development of faith through testing and promise fulfillment.

Central themes include God's unconditional covenant promises (land, descendants, blessing to nations), the call to faith and obedience, the testing of faith through delays and impossibilities, the contrast between divine promises and human schemes, and God's gracious persistence despite human failures. Abraham emerges as the father of faith whose trust in God's promises becomes the model for all believers (Romans 4, Galatians 3, Hebrews 11).

Theologically, these narratives establish:

1. salvation by grace through faith rather than works
2. covenant as God's gracious initiative binding Himself to His people
3. the necessity of patient trust when promises seem impossible
4. the consequences of attempting to fulfill God's promises through human effort
5. the pattern of divine testing producing mature faith.

The Abraham cycle foreshadows Christ as the ultimate seed through whom blessing extends to all nations (Galatians 3:16).

Historical Context

The patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12-50) reflect the cultural, social, and legal customs of the ancient Near East during the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1500 BCE). Archaeological discoveries including the Mari tablets, Nuzi tablets, and Egyptian records confirm many details: nomadic pastoralism, covenant-making ceremonies, marriage customs, property laws, and international travel patterns described in Genesis.

The cultural practices reflected include: treaty/covenant forms (Genesis 15), bride-price customs (Genesis 24, 29), inheritance laws favoring firstborn sons (Genesis 25, 27), adoption practices (Genesis 15, 30), levirate-type arrangements (Genesis 38), and Egyptian administrative systems (Genesis 41, 47). These parallels confirm Genesis's historical reliability while showing how God worked within ancient cultural frameworks to accomplish His purposes.

For later Israelites, these narratives established their identity as Abraham's descendants, explained their claim to Canaan, justified their possession of Joseph's bones (Exodus 13:19), and provided models of faith despite imperfection. The patriarchs' failures and God's faithfulness encouraged Israel that covenant relationship depended on God's grace rather than human merit. The movement from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt set the stage for the Exodus and conquest narratives.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does this verse deepen our understanding of God's character and His relationship with creation?
2. How should this truth about Faith's Inheritance shape our daily decisions and priorities?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and the gospel of redemption?

Interlinear Text

וְאַחֲרַי	כֵּן	קָבַר	אֶבְרָהָם	אֶת	שָׂרָה	אִשְׁתּוֹ	אֶל	מְעֵבֹת
And after	this	buried	Abraham	H853	Sarah	his wife	H413	in the cave
H310	H3651	H6912	H85		H8283	H802		H4631
שֵׂדֵה	הַמַּכְפֵּל	עַל	פְּנֵי	מַמְרֵי	הָ	וְ	חֵבְרוֹן	
of the field	of Machpelah	H5921	before	Mamre	H1931		the same is Hebron	
H7704	H4375		H6440	H4471			H2275	
בְּאֶרֶץ	כְּנָעַן:							
in the land	of Canaan							
H776	H3667							

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