

Genesis 25:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

Analysis

Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was g... 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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What theological truths about Abraham's Death emerge from this passage?
2. How should this truth about Birthright Sale shape our daily decisions and priorities?

3. What connections can we trace from this verse to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּנֹחַ ע	וַיָּמָת	אֲבֹרָה מ	בְּשֵׁיבָה ה	טוֹב ה	זָקֵן
gave up the ghost	and died	Then Abraham	old age	in a good	an old man
H1478	H4191	H85	H7872	H2896	H2205
וְשָׁבַע ע	וְאָסַף	אֶל	עַמּוֹ:		
and full	of years and was gathered	H413	to his people		
H7649	H622		H5971		

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 49:33 (Spirit): And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

Genesis 15:15 (Good): And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

1 Chronicles 29:28 (Good): And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

Genesis 25:17 (Spirit): And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people.

Judges 8:32 (Good): And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Job 42:17 (Parallel theme): So Job died, being old and full of days.

Proverbs 20:29 (Parallel theme): The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head.

Acts 13:36 (Parallel theme): For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

Job 5:26 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

Genesis 49:29 (Parallel theme): And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,

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