

Introduction

A few weeks ago we covered the death and burial of Sarah. She died at the age of 127 and Abraham bought the cave and field of Ephron in Mamre, and buried her there. It became the Cave of the Monarchs, and many of the patriarchs and their wives were buried there. We had Karla come over from French's Funeral Home and give us a lot more information about burial and funeral considerations. One of the takeaways from her talk was that if we want the wishes of the deceased to be carried out, those wishes need to be communicated in advance. Jacob did that before his death. He told his sons to *"bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site. There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah, there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there I buried Leah—the field and the cave that is in it, purchased from the sons of Heth."* After Jacob charged his son with his burial wishes, he breathed his last and was gathered to his people. (Genesis 49:29-33) Jacob was buried in the same cave that Abraham bought for Sarah to bury her, and it was also where he was buried.

A few weeks ago one of my father's favorite preachers, Russell Lee, died. At his funeral, someone preached a funeral message that Russell had written for himself. He had obviously given a lot of thought to his life, his coming death, and what he how he wanted to be remembered. When we think of funerals, it is natural to ponder on the life of the person and their significant accomplishments and memorable moments. Usually, much of this is given in the obituary and funeral program. These write-ups usually give the names of the surviving family members, and a brief write up about the person.

In our text today, Abraham dies and is buried by Ishmael and Isaac. We are given the descendants of Abraham through Keturah and through Ishmael. We are also given a very brief description of Abraham's reflection on his life before he died. We are also given something that is not included in obituaries or funeral write-ups, that he gave all his possessions to Isaac. It is important to have a will or trust so that there are no family feuds over the inheritance. This is one of the biggest sources of family feuds today, so it is important to have these plans in place, but it is not usually included in the public records. We will look at three things today, the descendants of Abraham through Keturah, the descendants of Abraham through Ishmael, and the death and burial of Abraham.

1. Descendants of Abraham Through Keturah
2. Descendants of Abraham Through Ishmael
3. Death and Burial of Abraham

1. Descendants of Abraham Through Keturah (Gen 25:1-6)

(Gen 25:1-6) "Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. {2} She bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. {3} Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim. {4} The sons of Midian were Ephah and Epher and Hanoch and Abida and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah. {5} Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac; {6} but to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the east."

Our passage begins with Abraham taking another wife by the name of Keturah. We do not know anything else about Keturah and their life together other than what is given in the passage. In verse five, we find that Abraham gave his entire estate and inheritance to Isaac, but to the sons of his concubines, he gave gifts while he was still living. A concubine is a wife, but is a wife that has no legal rights. Consequently, the children of the concubines had no legal rights to any inheritance. Hagar and Keturah are the concubines that are referenced here, so Ishmael and the sons of Keturah were given gifts but no portion of Abraham's estate. Today, we have lots of concubines, but they are not called concubines. Many men, particularly wealthy men, have pre-nuptial agreements that specify that the wife does not have any portion of the man's wealth or estate.

The word for concubine in Hebrew is *pilegish*, and it is of foreign origin. My personal opinion is that it is of foreign origin and a foreign practice, not God's intention or design for marriage. I believe God's clear intention for marriage is to be between a man and a woman. It is not between a man and two or three women. It is not between a man and another man. It is not between a woman and another woman. Marriage is between a man and a woman. God said, "for this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall be joined (or cleave) to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." (Gen 2:24)

Abraham was 137 years old when Sarah died. He lived to be 175 years, so he had another 38 years to live. With Sarah gone, he probably looked for companionship, and there was nothing wrong with him marrying again. God told Adam that it was not good for man to be alone. The animals and all of creation could not take the place of a wife, so God created a help-meet and companion for Adam. Abraham did not have to spend his last thirty-eight years alone; he had another companion to share and enjoy his life with. (Genesis 2:18-24.)

When a man remarries, the new wife, and any children that come from that marriage, would normally share in the inheritance. But, it was made very clear that in the new marriage to Keturah, the six sons and ten grandsons would not share in the estate. Abraham gave gifts to the other sons, but he gave the entire estate to his son Isaac. If Abraham had more sons with Sarah, his estate would have been split between the sons. Each son would have a birthright, but the oldest son got a double portion of the inheritance. (Deut 21:15-17) Another benefit of the oldest son's birthright was the judicial authority. If the father was a king, the kingdom would normally go to the oldest son. (In 2 Chronicles 21:3 Jehoshaphat "gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the firstborn.") In our American culture today, many people divide up their estates equally among all the children. The practice of giving the oldest son a double portion is not practiced. Additionally, daughters today also share in the inheritance.

It is important to clearly state in a will or in a trust what inheritance people will get. According to a survey by TD Wealth, the biggest threat to a family's inheritance is family feuds. They cause major conflicts and are very expensive. It is important to have a will or trust. It is important to have a single executor of the will. There are a number of things that experts recommend to head off fights over inheritances. Abraham made it very clear that his estate would go to Isaac.

He also sent his sons to the east. In Genesis 16:12, God spoke to Hagar and told her, "He will be a wild donkey of a man, his hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him; and he will live to the east of all his brothers." So Ishmael lived to the east, as did the sons of Keturah. Abraham sent them to the east of the land that Isaac had.

2. Descendants of Abraham Through Hagar

(Gen 25:12-18) “Now these are the records of the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham; {13} and these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael, and Kedar and Adbeel and Mibsam {14} and Mishma and Dumah and Massa, {15} Hadad and Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. {16} These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages, and by their camps; twelve princes according to their tribes. {17} These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. {18} They settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria; he settled in defiance of all his relatives.”

Ishmael was the only son that Abraham had with Hagar. He had twelve sons, and they were princes according to their tribes. We are not given any names of daughters that he had. Earlier in Genesis 21:13, God had told Abraham that he would make a nation out of Ishmael. A few verses later in Genesis 21:18, God told Hagar to lift up Ishmael and hold him by the hand, for God was going to make a great nation of him. God blessed Ishmael and did make a nation out of him. His descendants settled from Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt, just as God had spoken. It also said that he settled in defiance of his relatives, which was also what God had spoken. His hand would be against everyone and everyone's hand would be against him. (Genesis 16:12)

3. Abraham's Death and Burial

(Gen 25:7-11) “These are all the years of Abraham's life that he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years. {8} Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people. {9} Then his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, facing Mamre, {10} the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth; there Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife. {11} It came about after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac lived by Beer-lahai-roi.”

I changed the order of the material because I wanted to cover all the descendants first. Next week we will begin looking at the descendants of Abraham through Isaac. In this section, Abraham died at the age of 175. Next week, we will see that Isaac was sixty when Rebekah gives birth to Esau and Jacob. Abraham was one hundred when Isaac was born, so Abraham was 160 when Esau and Jacob were born. He knew his grandsons for fifteen years before he died. Another way to look at it is that Esau and Jacob got to know and spend time with their grandfather for fifteen years. They got to know the father of the faith.

Our text says that Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life. The King James Version says that Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age. The King James also uses this expression, gave up the ghost when Isaac dies and also when Jesus was on the cross and died. (Luke 23:45-46).

(Gen 25:8 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.”

(Luke 23:45-46 KJV) "And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. {46} And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

I want to talk about giving up the ghost for a minute. We are born with a body, soul, and spirit. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Paul prays, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul talks about the resurrection of the dead. He mentions that we are sown a perishable body and raised up with an imperishable body. Our bodies are perishable. In 2 Corinthians 5:1-3, Paul calls our bodies an earthly tent and that it will be torn down so that we can have a building from God which is eternal. Our bodies are mortal and will perish. Abraham's body lasted a long time, 175 years, but it finally wore out and perished. When our body dies, our spirit and soul do not die. They leave the body and so when Abraham died, his soul and spirit left his body. That is what is meant by giving up the ghost.

We will receive a new body. One of the six foundational teachings is the resurrection of the dead. Jesus was the first fruit. Just as He was raised from the dead, we will be raised up with an imperishable body. There was a big problem in the church in Ephesus. Two men, Hymenaeus and Philetus had upset the faith of some by teaching that the resurrection had already taken place. Paul said that these men had strayed from the truth. (2 Tim 2:17-18) The resurrection from the dead is an essential part of the gospel message. When the resurrection of the dead takes place, some will be resurrected to a resurrection of life, and those who are without Christ will be resurrected to judgment. In John 5:24, Jesus says those who believe in Him do not come into judgment, but have passed out of death into life.

(John 5:28-29) ""Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, {29} and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment."

(John 5:24) "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."

Our souls and spirits are not perishable. They continue to live. Our souls go to the place of the dead. In the Old Testament, the word to describe the place of the dead is Sheol. In the New Testament, Hades is the place of the dead. Our text says that Abraham was gathered to his people. Abraham's forefathers were in the place of the dead, so Abraham's soul and spirit was gathered to Sheol, the place of the dead, with his forefathers.

There is much confusion about Sheol and Hades. Before Christ came and paid the price for sins, the souls of everyone that died went to Sheol or Hades. There were two different places in Sheol. The first place is called Paradeiso. When Jesus was on the cross, He had a revealing conversation with one of the criminals. Both Jesus and the criminal were going to die and go to the place of the dead. The criminal acknowledged his own sin and confesses that Jesus was righteous, and that He was God. He asked Jesus to remember him when He goes into His kingdom. Jesus tells the criminal, "*truly I say to you, today, you shall be with Me in Paradise.*" It is very probable that this Paradise is the side of the chasm in Hades that Lazarus was in. It was the place where the righteous were being kept until the resurrection of the dead.

(Luke 23:39-43) "And one of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" {40} But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? {41} "And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." {42} And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" {43} And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise.""

The other place in Sheol or Hades is tartaroo (Strong's G5020). Vines defines as the deepest abyss of Hades. This term is only used once in the Scriptures, in 2 Peter 2:4, where God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them into tartaroo, which is a pit of darkness, reserved for judgment. Tartaroo was a special dark place where fallen angels were kept until the time of judgment, at which time they would be cast into geenna, a place reserved for them and the devil. But, it is referenced by Jesus in the account of Lazarus and the rich man. In the account, both died and were buried. In Hades the rich man was in torment and Lazarus was being comforted by Abraham. The rich man cried out for Abraham to send Lazarus with some water to cool his tongue. The rich man is obviously not in a very comfortable place, while Lazarus is in a place of comfort. Abraham tells the rich man that there is a chasm between them and that they cannot cross over. There were two distinct places in Hades. It is likely that the one that the rich man was in was tartaroo. (Luke 16:20-31)

Hebrews 9:27 tells us that "*it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.*" People without Christ are held in Hades until the time of judgment. Those who have received Christ are not kept in Hades any longer. In the Traditional Version of the Apostles Creed, we read that Jesus was crucified, dead, and buried, and that He descended into hell and the third day he rose from the dead. In the Ecumenical Version of the Apostles Creed, it says that Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried and He descended to the dead. This is correct. It is based on Psalm 16:8-10, 68:18, Acts 2:27, and also on Ephesians 4:8-10. Paul wrote that Jesus descended into the lower parts of the earth. He also quotes Psalm 68:18 which says when He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives. When Jesus left Hades, He brought out all the believers who were waiting for Him to ransom them. Jesus had paid their debts and they were now free.

Traditional Version of the Apostles Creed	Ecumenical Version of the Apostles Creed
I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.	I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy universal church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

In Acts 2:27, Peter quoted from Psalm 16 and said, "*You will not abandon My soul to Hades.*" In Psalm 16:10, which is written in Hebrew, David used the word Sheol. Jesus went to the place of the dead. If you translate Hades as hell, then you cannot also translate the eternal lake of fire, which is also referred to as the second death. At the judgment of the dead, those in Hades will be judged, and those without Christ will be thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev 20:15, 21:8) After everyone in Hades has been judged, death and Hades will also be thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev 20:14) So, Jesus did not go to hell, the place of eternal torment, the second death. Jesus went to Hades and then was resurrected from the dead. When Jesus told the thief on the cross that he would join Him in Paradeiso that day, it was in Hades, the place of the dead. (This is something that is falsely taught in some churches and movements.)

(Rev 20:14-15) "And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. {15} And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

(Rev 21:8) ""But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.""

Abraham breathed his last and gave up his ghost. He was gathered to his people. But, that is not where he is now. Abraham is with the Lord in heaven. And, when you and I pass away and give up our spirit, we will be in heaven. In Philippians 1:21-24, Paul was nearing the end of his ministry. He said, "*For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.*" Paul wanted to be with Christ, as that is better, but he recognized there was much work that still needed to be done on earth.

You and I will also go straight to heaven. We will not go to Hades, the place of the dead. We will be with Christ in heaven. We will join all the other saints and our forefathers in the faith in heaven, where there is fullness of joy. We will not have our resurrected body yet; that will come later, but we will be with Jesus.

After Abraham died, his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah. He also had six sons with Keturah, but it was Isaac and Ishmael that buried him. A few weeks ago we covered the death and burial of Sarah. She died at the age of 127 and Abraham bought the cave and field of Ephron in Mamre, and buried her there. It became the Cave of the Monarchs, and many of the patriarchs and their wives were buried there. We had Karla come over from French's Funeral Home and one of the takeaways from her talk was that if we want the wishes of the deceased to be carried out, those wishes need to be communicated in advance. Abraham let everyone know about his inheritance. He had purchased the Cave of the Monarchs and he was to be buried there with Sarah.

One final word before closing. It said that Abraham died in a ripe old age, an old man satisfied with life. Some versions say he was full of years. I hope that when I die, this is not what they say about me and my life. I like what Genesis 15:6 says, that "*Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.*" I like what Hebrews 11:8-12 says about Abraham. It reads,

“By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.... Therefore there was born even of one man, and him as good as dead at that, as many descendants as the stars of heaven in number, and innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.” I would have liked to see them say that Abraham was a man of faith, that he was obedient to God in all things. Abraham did not withhold anything, even his son Isaac from the Lord. Abraham was a man that God blessed and that all the nations in the world would be blessed by the seed of Abraham. I would have rather seen that than he died as an old, ripe man, full of years. His age tells us that.

When I die, I want to be like Paul. When the time came for his departure, he said in 2 Tim 4:6-7, *“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;”* I want to be like Jesus who said in John 17:4, *“I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”* I want it said that Bill was a man of faith who accomplished the work that God gave to him. Bill devoted his life to studying, practicing, and teaching God's word. Bill devoted his life to prayer. Bill devoted his life to his wife and family, and he loved Karen like Christ loved the church. Bill devoted his life to building God's kingdom and he laid his life down for the local church. Bill honored God with his life and wealth. He honored his parents; he honored his wife, and he honored others. That is how I want to be remembered.

Conclusion and Applications

This morning, we have looked at Abraham's final days. Abraham was a man who believed and trusted God, and was obedient to God. This morning, do you believe God? Have you placed your faith in Christ? Have you put your trust in God? If not, let this be the day that you make Jesus the Lord of your life.

Abraham breathed his last and gave up his spirit. Like Abraham, all of us are going to breathe our last some day and give up our spirit. Those that know Christ will go immediately to be with the Father in heaven. Those that do not know Christ will go to Hades and will wait there for the judgement of the wicked. It was appointed for all men to die and after that is judgment. The only way to escape the judgment is to place your faith in Christ. If you do not know Christ today, when you die, you will go to the place of the dead and await judgment. That is not something to look forward to. The best thing to do is to receive Christ today and pass out of judgment into life. Then, you have something very glorious to look forward to.

This morning you can receive Christ if you believe that He is the Son of God, that He died, was buried, and was raised from the dead, and if you are willing to confess Him as your Lord or Master. If you believe and are willing to surrender your life to Him this morning, pray with me. *“Father, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He came to earth to take away the sins of the earth. I believe that He died, was buried, and was raised from the dead. This morning, I want to ask You to forgive me of my sins. Jesus, I ask You to come into my life and to be my Lord. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.”* If you prayed that this morning, you have the assurance of Scripture that He has come into your life and you have a wonderful future with Him to look forward to.

Introduction (Genesis 49:29-33)

1. **Descendants of Abraham Through Keturah** (Gen 25:1-6, Gen 2:18-24, Deut 21:15-17, 2 Chron 21:3, Gen 16:12)

2. **Descendants of Abraham Through Hagar** (Gen 25:12-18, 21:13, 16:12)

3. **Abraham's Death and Burial** (Gen 25:7-11, Luke 23:45-46, Gen 25:8 KJV, 1 Thess 5:23, 1 Cor 15, 2 Cor 5:1-3, Heb 6:2, John 5:24, 28-29, Luke 23:39-43, 2 Pet 2:4, Luke 16:20-31, Heb 9:27, Ps 16: 8-10, 68:18, Acts 2:27, Eph 4:8-10, Psa 68:18, Acts 2:27, Psa 16:10, Rev 20:15, 21:8, 20:14 Phil 1:21-24, 2 Tim 4:6-7, John 17:4)

Conclusion and Applications