

Chapter 19: The Completion of Abraham

Genesis 25:1–18

In Genesis 25:1–18, we read about the end of Abraham’s life in this world. As reach Abraham’s last chapter, we must give a final assessment to the question that we have been able to answer only provisionally up to this point: *Has God been faithful to keep his promises to Abraham?* God promised to make Abraham exceedingly fruitful and to give Abraham and his offspring the land of Canaan. By the end of Genesis 24, however, Abraham only has two children—Ishmael (whom Abraham sent away; Gen. 21:8–21) and Isaac. Can we really say that God has fulfilled his promises to multiply Abraham into innumerable offspring? Furthermore, Abraham only owns the plot of land containing the burial cave for Sarah, where Abraham himself will be buried (Gen. 25:9–10). Can we really say that God has fulfilled his promises to give Abraham the whole land of Canaan?

This last narrative about Abraham’s life does not tie up the loose ends of all God’s unfulfilled promises to Abraham. We will indeed learn more about how God partially fulfills his promises to Abraham. The primary emphasis of this passage, though, directs our attention forward to learn how God will *eventually* fulfill all his promises to Abraham. In the same way, God also assures us that he will be faithful to keep his promises to us, but with an important caveat: God’s faithfulness does not move as quickly as we would always like. After all, a thousand years is like a day in God’s sight (Ps. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8). Nevertheless, the story of God’s work over thousands of years of human history demonstrates that God is faithful, even when we do not live to see the fulfillment of his promises. This passage about Abraham’s death underscores the point that *in order to fulfill his promises completely, God does not fulfill his promises immediately.*

God’s Faithfulness to Abraham (Gen. 25:1–4)

As Genesis wraps up the story of Abraham’s life, we learn a surprising new fact. Here, we see that Abraham patriarch takes another wife, Keturah, and that Keturah bears him many other children besides Ishmael and Isaac:

[1] Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. [2] She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. [3] Jokshan fathered Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. [4] The sons of Midian were Ephah, Ephher, Hanoah, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. (Gen. 25:1–4)

This is the only place within the book of Genesis where we read anything about Keturah, and she is only called Abraham’s “concubine” in 1 Chronicles 1:32.¹ Furthermore, we read that Abraham has children by his “concubines” (plural) in Genesis 25:6. These two points raise a question about

whether Abraham may have taken Keturah as his wife/concubine earlier in his life, and perhaps even during Sarah's lifetime.² This would be a surprising detail to bury in the final pages of Abraham's history, but there are three additional factors to consider as try to understand the timeline of Abraham's marriage to Keturah.

The Chronology of the Concubines

First, we must recognize that the author of Genesis is not as interested in strict chronology as in theology.³ The narratives of Genesis frequently fall out of chronological order, even from the very beginning of the book. In the two complementary accounts of creation in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, we read of all God's work of creation (Gen. 1:1–2:3) and then circle back around to read about the "generations of the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 2:4). The second account includes a longer version of the creation of the man and the woman (Gen. 2:5–25), even though we already read of their creation in the first account (Gen. 1:26–27). Also, we read of the death of Abraham's father, Terah, in Haran (Gen. 11:32) before we read about Yahweh's call to Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3). The narratives describe these two events out of order, since Yahweh's call came to Abraham in Mesopotamia, *before* he lived in Haran (Gen. 12:4; cf. Acts 7:2).⁴ Even here in Genesis 25, the narrative tells us about Abraham's death (Gen. 25:7–8) before telling us about the birth of Esau and Jacob (Gen. 25:19–26). Again, these two events are out of chronological order, since Isaac is sixty years old at the birth of his sons (Gen. 25:26), which means that Abraham is only been 160 years old (cf. Gen. 21:5). If Abraham dies when he is 175 years old (Gen. 25:7), the births of Esau and Jacob take place a full fifteen years before Abraham's death.⁵ With this in mind, it is important to note that the grammar of Genesis 25:1 could permit either the pluperfect tense ("Abraham *had* taken another wife") or the past tense ("Abraham *took* another wife").⁶ Still, while either translation is *possible*, it is also true that the past tense ("Abraham *took* another wife") is the more natural reading of the Hebrew.⁷

Second, we already know that Abraham is willing to violate the one-flesh union of his marriage. He demonstrated his capacity for sin in this area by taking Hagar as an additional wife (Gen. 16:3) and by twice allowing his own wife Sarah to be taken in marriage to other men (Gen. 12:15, 19; 20:2–3). Therefore, we cannot preclude the possibility that Abraham took Keturah as a concubine during Sarah's lifetime on the basis of Abraham's character, since his history in this area is checkered. If so, then Hagar and Keturah may be the "concubines" mentioned in Genesis 25:6.⁸ Hagar is never explicitly called a "concubine," but only a "wife" (Gen. 16:3) and a "slave-woman" or "slave-wife" (Gen. 21:10, 12, 13); however, Hagar "probably could also be described as a "concubine'...as [Jacob's slave-wife/concubine] Bilhah is in 35:22 (cf. 30:3, 'slave-wife')." If so, then "both Hagar (16:3) and Keturah (25:1) are called 'wife' in one place but 'concubine' in another (25:6)."¹⁰

Third, if Abraham does indeed take Keturah as a wife at the very end of his life, after the death of Sarah, then how does he conceive so many children by her? Throughout Abraham's life, much of his childlessness arose from the barrenness of Sarah (cf. Gen. 11:30; 16:1). By contrast, Abraham conceives Ishmael by Hagar without difficulty (Gen. 16:4). Nevertheless, as time passes, Abraham also becomes too old to conceive children (Gen. 17:17; 18:12). The Apostle Paul even describes Abraham's body "as good as dead" (Rom. 4:19) by the time Isaac was conceived. At that point, Abraham was one already hundred years old, and then Sarah dies thirty-seven years later (cf. Gen. 17:17; 21:5; 23:1).¹¹ From this point of view, then Abraham's fertility seems to suggest that he took Keturah at a much earlier age, before he became "old, well advanced in years" (Gen. 24:1).¹² If

Abraham does indeed take Keturah after Sarah's death, then we must recognize that his children through Keturah represent a miraculous, "complete rejuvenation of the old man of the previous narratives."¹³

The Father of a Multitude of Nations

In fact, we do not have enough information to know when Abraham took Keturah as his wife/concubine. Our ignorance in itself is an important point, however, since it reveals that the narrative is not trying to emphasize *when* Abraham married Keturah. Instead, the emphasis of the text focuses first on the fact that Keturah bore six children to Abraham, and that those children bore other children (Gen. 25:3–4). Most notably, we see that the Midianite nation arises from Abraham himself, since we will encounter the Midianites several times through the rest of the Old Testament.¹⁴ In many ways, this passage is like the table of nations from Genesis 10, defining "Israel's relationships with some of the neighboring nomadic peoples who inhabited the desert areas on the fringes of Canaan and traded with them."¹⁵

Aside from Midian, however, the other nations arising from these families will "play little part in the history of salvation."¹⁶ So, the purpose of mentioning them here is not even to prepare us for later narratives involving Israel. Instead, by including the names of these children here, we see God multiplying Abraham at the very end of his story. God promised to make Abraham the "father of a multitude of nations" (Gen. 17:4, 5), to make Abraham "exceedingly fruitful" and to make him "into nations" (Gen. 17:6). We already knew that God would give rise to nations through Ishmael and Isaac, but now we see the beginnings of a greater fulfillment of these promises. In this late narrative about Abraham's fruitfulness through Keturah, we see God raising up many more nations from Abraham.

God's Faithfulness to Abraham's Offspring (Gen. 25:5–11)

Even so, this narrative keeps "the focus undistractedly on the promise of Isaac and its fulfillment."¹⁷ Yes, God makes Abraham into the father of a multitude of nations through Sarah, Hagar, and Keturah. But no, God does not allow Abraham to dilute the covenant, blessing, and inheritance promised to Isaac:

[5] Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. [6] But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and while he was still living he sent them away from his son Isaac, eastward to the east country. (Gen. 25:5–6)

The text insists that Abraham gives everything to Isaac (Gen. 25:5), while the sons of the concubines only receive "gifts" (Gen. 25:6).¹⁸ Furthermore, Abraham sends the sons of his concubines away from Isaac (Gen. 25:6). While the sons of a man's full wives were legally guaranteed full shares of their father's inheritance (cf. Deut. 21:15–17; cf. Num. 27:1–11), the sons of concubines had no similar guarantees.¹⁹ In the same way that Abraham "sent away" Hagar and Ishmael with gifts of bread and water (Gen. 21:14), so also Abraham now "sends away" the sons of his concubines with gifts (Gen. 25:6)—possibly only with "necessities at their departure," as with Hagar and Ishmael.²⁰ Abraham has been a sojourner in Canaan, but he does not permit his children to be a sojourner near to Isaac, so he

sends them away.²¹ Calvin writes, “This dismissal was, indeed, apparently harsh and cruel; but it was agreeable to the appointment and decree of God, in order that the entire possession of the land might remain for the posterity of Isaac.”²² God promised to establish his covenant with Isaac alone (Gen. 17:19), and he insisted that “through Isaac shall your offspring be named” (Gen. 21:12).²³ By sending his sons away, Abraham protects the covenant blessings for Isaac.²⁴

The Covenant and Blessing for the Nations

Without question, it must be painful for Abraham to send away the sons of his concubines, just as it was painful to send away Ishmael (Gen. 21:11–14). Nevertheless, sending away these sons reflects two important theological points. First, by sending the sons of his concubines eastward (Gen. 25:6), we see that these sons will indeed become nations *from* Abraham, but they will be alienated from the *covenant* of Abraham. Eastward migration is a recurring theme in Genesis. Like Adam and Eve when exiled from the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:23, 24), like Cain when he was exiled from before the face of God (Gen. 4:16), and like the wandering peoples who founded the city of Babylon (Gen. 11:2), so also the eastward migration of Abraham’s other children symbolizes a spiritual reality of being separated from God.²⁵

Second, sending these sons away does not mean that they will be forever banished from the household of Abraham. Rather, Isaiah 60:6–22 foretells a day when these same sons, “Midian and Ephah” (Isa. 60:6; cf. Gen. 25:4) will be brought into Abraham’s covenant. When they come, Isaiah prophesies that these foreigners will bring the wealth of their “camels...gold and frankincense” (Isa. 60:6), so that “Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut, that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession” (Isa. 60:11). This same promise reappears in Revelation 21:24–26: “[24] By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, [25] and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. [26] They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.” That is, this sending away is not permanent, but only temporary until God raises up his Messiah through the offspring of Isaac, through whom he will bless all the nations of the earth in a new covenant that includes Gentiles alongside the Jews. Therefore, these other sons *must* be sent away in order for them to return to a “true home” that Jesus Christ himself will prepare for them.²⁶

The Death of Abraham

After finishing all these preparations, Abraham dies at the age of 175:

[7] These are the days of the years of Abraham's life, 175 years. [8] Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. [9] Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, [10] the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried, with Sarah his wife. (Gen. 25:7–10)

Abraham was 75 years old when he entered the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:4), meaning that he lived one hundred years in the land as a sojourner.²⁷ Abraham perseveres in faith for a remarkably long time, as Calvin notes: “he deserves the praise of wonderful and incomparable patience, for having wandered through the space of a hundred years, while God led him about in various directions,

contented, both in life and death, with the bare promise of God.²⁸ Now, as we come to the end of Abraham's life, we must ask whether all of Abraham's sufferings and sacrifices were worth it. Iain Duguid answers this question carefully:

The answer given to us in Genesis 25 is “yes and no,” or better, “yes and not yet.” Yes, God had begun to fulfill his promises to Abraham. But no, those promises were not yet fulfilled completely; he still had to die as he lived, in faith.²⁹

This is a critical point. We do not read in this passage of the total fulfillment of all God's promises toward Abraham. Rather, we read that Abraham sees only some of God's promises fulfilled during his lifetime. Beyond this partial fulfillment, Abraham must continue to trust God to work out the fulfillment of the rest of his promises after his death.

The Burial of Abraham

Abraham's long life is itself a fulfillment of one of God's promises: “As for yourself, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age” (Gen. 15:15).³⁰ Moreover, Abraham's death in peace at a “good old age” stands in contrast to the remarks that Abraham's grandson Jacob makes about his own life: “The days of the years of my sojourning are 130 years. Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their sojourning” (Gen. 47:9).³¹ For all his failures, Abraham's life is characterized by a consistent faith that Jacob does not replicate. Abraham has experienced a hard life in some ways, but on the whole, his life has been good because of God's grace toward him as he has walked by faith. Abraham has lived by faith, and by faith Abraham is now “gathered to his people” (cf. Gen. 25:17; 35:29; 49:29, 33; Num. 20:24; 27:13; Deut. 32:50) in death.³²

Abraham's sons Isaac and Ishmael reunite to bury their father, as Jacob and Esau will do for their father Isaac (Gen. 35:29).³³ Importantly, they bury Abraham in “the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried, with Sarah his wife” (Gen. 25:9–10). We should notice that the narrative here repeats many of the details from Genesis 23 about Abraham's transaction to purchase this land. These details underscore that the “final resting place of Abraham was in a portion of the Promised Land that he rightfully owned.”³⁴ At the beginning of this passage, Abraham's many children signified the beginnings of the fulfillment of God's promises to make Abraham the father of many nations. Now, Abraham's burial plot similarly signifies the beginnings of the fulfillment of God's promises to give Abraham's offspring the whole land of Canaan.

The Blessing of Isaac

After Abraham's death, the text tells us of God's blessing for Isaac: “After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son. And Isaac settled at Beer-lahai-roi” (Gen. 25:11). God's blessing for Isaac will become the theme of “the next major section of Genesis, i.e., 25:19–35:29, especially 26:12.”³⁵ Nevertheless, before turning to the larger story of Isaac, the narrator must first tell us about Ishmael (Gen. 25:12–18). Before we read of the generations of Ishmael, though, the narrative gives us this summary of God's blessing for Isaac. We do not read that God blessed Abraham in all things until the end of Abraham's life (Gen. 24:1), but here God blesses Isaac “at the threshold of his adult life.”³⁶

Like Abraham, Isaac will also experience significant hardship and suffering during his lifetime; however, God establishes his blessing for Isaac from the beginning.³⁷

Charles Wesley's line that we noted in the last chapter is worth mentioning again here: "God buries his workmen, but carries on his work." Or, as Allen Ross writes, "No one is indispensable in God's program. Good people die, and others take up the task to continue God's program....Death seems to remain the most sobering element in the human struggle for the blessing of God. But the work of God to bless the world continues from generation to generation, as the report about Isaac indicates (v. 11)."³⁸ Even a giant like Abraham must be gathered to his people in death as he awaits God's work in bringing the fullness of redemption to completion. Although we stand much further forward in the progress of Christ's kingdom through human history, we too will likely go to our deaths before seeing everything finished. This text calls us to take heart in the hope that God will carry his blessing forward, accomplishing what he will through us, and then moving forward to bring all things together according to his perfect will. We should remember Paul's exhortation as we await our coming resurrection from the dead: "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (1 Cor. 15:58).

God's Faithfulness to the Nations (Gen. 25:12–18)

Before turning our attention fully to Isaac, we must learn what happens to Ishmael. This is important, since we must see whether God fulfills his promises to Ishmael:

[12] These are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, bore to Abraham. [13] These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, [14] Mishma, Dumah, Massa, [15] Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. [16] These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. [17] (These are the years of the life of Ishmael: 137 years. He breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.) [18] They settled from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria. He settled over against all his kinsmen. (Gen. 25:12–18)

We saw the fulfillment of God's promises to make Abraham the father of a *multitude* of nations (Gen. 17:4–5) in Keturah's many offspring. Now, we see that a *great* nation arises from Ishmael.³⁹ Importantly, God made promises about Ishmael to both Hagar and to Abraham. To Hagar, God promised to multiply her offspring "so that they cannot be numbered for multitude" (Gen. 16:10), and that Ishmael "shall father twelve princes"; to Abraham, God promised to make Ishmael "into a great nation" (Gen. 17:20).⁴⁰ Here, we see the fulfillment of all these promises, most clearly in the "twelve princes" (Gen. 25:16) arising from Ishmael. Additionally, the report of this first generation implies their eventual growth into a great, innumerable nation.

The Fulfillment of God's Promises

Even so, the text avoids saying that God *blesses* Ishmael in the same way that God *blesses* Isaac

(Gen. 25:11).⁴¹ The reason for this lack of blessing is clearly stated in Genesis 25:12: Ishmael is “Abraham’s son,” but the son “whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s servant, bore to Abraham.” Kenneth Mathews writes, “By mentioning the mother of Ishmael, the passage clarifies that though a son he was not the legitimate recipient of the patriarch’s inheritance, who by divine decree would be borne only by Sarah (17:18–19).”⁴² For this reason, just as the sons of Abraham’s concubines depart from the land of Canaan, so the sons of Ishmael also clear out of Canaan, thereby keeping “the inheritance vacant for the sons of Isaac.”⁴³ Finally, we see the fulfillment of God’s promise that Ishmael would become “a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, and he shall dwell over against all his kinsmen” (Gen. 16:12) in the final line of this passage: “He settled over against all his kinsmen” (Gen. 25:18).⁴⁴

Ishmael indeed becomes a great nation like Israel, but not a nation marked by the blessings that belong exclusively to Israel. Derek Kidner puts it this way:

To some degree this son of Abraham would be a shadow, almost a parody, of his father, his twelve princes notable in their times (17:20; 25:13) but not in the history of salvation; his restless existence no pilgrimage but an end in itself; his nonconformism a habit of mind, not a light to the nations.⁴⁵

Ishmael’s descendants, therefore, will have a complicated relationship with Isaac’s descendants: “On the one hand, these tribesmen are viewed as intimately related to Israel; on the other hand, these tales relate that tension between Israelites and Ishmaelites can be traced right back to the squabbles of Isaac and Ishmael in Abraham’s household.”⁴⁶ God fulfills his promises to Ishmael, but he also keeps them separate from Israel. Ishmael does not receive the covenant promises and blessings of Isaac.

Deferred Blessings

Or, better, they will not receive the covenant promises and blessings *right away*. Earlier, we saw that Keturah’s exiled children will return to Israel, bringing their wealth and glory with them (Isa. 60:6). The very next verse in Isaiah 60 states that the exiled children of Ishmael, Kedar and Nebaioth (Gen. 25:13), will do the same: “All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered to you; the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall come up with acceptance on my altar, and I will beautify my beautiful house” (Isa. 60:7). One day, after God raises up the *true* offspring of Abraham—his own Son Jesus Christ—then God will call people from every tribe, language, people, and nation into his covenant through faith in Jesus (Rev. 5:9). Certainly, this will include covenant strangers who never had any access to God’s covenant (Eph. 2:11–13). Isaiah 60, however, teaches that God’s *only* begotten Son will also reconcile Abraham’s *other* sons. God will fulfill his promises completely, even if he does not fulfill his promises immediately.

Discussion Questions

1. Where does God seem slow to fulfill his promises toward you? How does God’s seeming slowness tempt you to doubt his faithfulness toward you? What have the narratives about Abraham taught you about God’s faithfulness, even when we wish he would move faster? What comfort might we take from seeing Abraham die before God fulfills all his promises toward him?

2. During the majority of Abraham's life, was it plausible to him believe that he would indeed become the father of a multitude of nations? How was he tempted to doubt God's promises to give him offspring? How did God show his faithfulness to Abraham, in spite of his doubts? How has God shown his faithfulness to you, in spite of your doubts?

3. In the larger plan of redemption, why must Abraham give the entire inheritance to Isaac and send away his other sons (Gen. 25:5–6)? Why must God single out Isaac for the blessing (Gen. 25:11)? How does God use the offspring of Isaac ultimately to raise up the Lord Jesus Christ? How does this long view give us perspective for what God might be doing in our own lives?

4. What hope does God offer in Isaiah 60 about bringing back the exiled sons of Abraham? What does this teach about God's grace and mercy toward these exiled peoples? What does this teach about God's righteousness and faithfulness toward these exiled peoples? What does this teach about God's grace, mercy, righteousness, and faithfulness toward us?

Notes

1. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 164–65.
2. Kidner, *Genesis*, 160.
3. "But as elsewhere, Genesis is not interested in sociological observation or historical anecdote for its own sake but in theology, in the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham." (Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 165).
4. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 258.
5. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 158.
6. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 165.
7. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 183.
8. Kidner, *Genesis*, 160–61.
9. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 159–60.
10. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 165.
11. Calvin, *Genesis*, vol. 2, 34. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom02.iii.i.html>>
12. Kidner, *Genesis*, 160.
13. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 183–84.
14. "'Midian' is frequently mentioned in texts dealing with the premonarchy period. Midian or the Midianites are a group of tribes inhabiting the deserts surrounding Israel. They were traders (37:28, 36). Moses married a Midianite and later was advised by his Midianite father-in-law somewhere in Sinai (Exod 3:1; 18:1–24). Later, Midianites associated with the Moabites harried Israel in Transjordan (Num 25; 31:1–12). And Gideon drove them back into Transjordan (Judg 7–8)." (Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 159.)
15. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 161.
16. Kidner, *Genesis*, 160.
17. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 158.
18. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 184.
19. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 159.
20. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 355.

21. “Abraham is concerned that his sons by Keturah not be too close to his son by Sarah. This concern may reflect the same kind of concern of ch. 24 that Isaac not get too close to the locals by marrying a Canaanite.” (Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 165.)

22. Calvin, *Genesis*, vol. 2, 35. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom02.iii.i.html>>

23. Kidner, *Genesis*, 160.

24. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 425.

25. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 355.

26. “In God’s plan, these sons were sent away that there might be a true home, in the end, to return to: see Isaiah 60:6ff.” (Kidner, *Genesis*, 161.)

27. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 160.

28. Calvin, *Genesis*, vol. 2, 36. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom02.iii.i.html>>

29. Duguid, *Living in the Gap Between Promise and Reality*, 158.

30. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 424.

31. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 184.

32. “The expression *was gathered to his kin* is found only ten times in the OT, and all of them are in the Pentateuch. Here in 25:8 it is distinguished from death (v. 8a) and burial (v. 9), and accordingly suggests the reunion of the deceased with his forefathers. A fourfold process is involved here. An individual breathes his last, dies, is gathered to his kin, and is buried. Dying precedes burial. Therefore, to be gathered to one’s kin/fathers before being buried implies either a belief in the continued existence in the netherworld or that the spirit of the deceased joined the ancestors in the underworld, and that even in death family solidarity was not broken. Of the six individuals in the Pentateuch of whom the phrase ‘gathered to his kin’ is used (Abraham, 25:8; Ishmael; 25:17; Isaac, 35:29; Jacob, 49:29, 33; Moses, Num. 27:13; Deut. 32:50; and Aaron, Num. 20:24; Deut. 32:50), four of them were not buried in an ancestral grave (Abraham, Ishmael, Moses, and Aaron).” (Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 168.)

33. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 426.

34. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 184.

35. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 160.

36. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 168.

37. “The theme of inherited blessing that is central to the Abraham narrative appears in the final verse. The blessing, however, is not automatic, as the rivalry in the Jacob-Esau story shows. Unlike Isaac and Jacob’s practice, Abraham did not formally invoke the blessing on Isaac (cf. 27:27–29; 28:1; 48:15,20; 49:28). Our passage indicates that the Lord alone confers blessing. The language of blessing is reminiscent of 24:1 concerning Abraham, but only later can it be said as with his father that God blessed Isaac “in every way” (24:1). By this concluding verse, the author confirms that the transition of divine blessing to the new generation is complete. The blessing does not die with the favored patriarch; it is an eternal promise rooted in the will of God (13:15; 17:7–8,13,19).” (Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 356.)

38. Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 426.

39. Calvin, *Genesis*, vol. 2, 39. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom02.iii.i.html>>

40. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 163.

41. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 184–85.

42. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 359.

43. Calvin, *Genesis*, vol. 2, 39. Available online: <<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom02.iii.i.html>>

44. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 163.

45. Kidner, *Genesis*, 138.

46. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50, Volume 2*, 165.