

## **Genesis 25:1-11 – Old age and death**

**Abraham and Keturah:** We now read about the end of Abraham's life. It was nearly 40 years after Sarah had died. In that time, he took another wife, called Keturah. We know little about her. Perhaps she was one of the chief servants in Abraham's large household. The Bible says that marriage is life-long; but when one partner dies, then the other is free to marry again, only they must marry a believer (1 Corinthians 7:39). We also read that Abraham had concubines. A concubine was a kind of inferior wife. Many powerful men in the east had them, but this was not approved by God (Matthew 19:4-9). Abraham's grandson Jacob went further and had two wives. Further down, David took another man's wife, and Solomon married scores of Canaanite women who led him astray. Our weaknesses may become great glaring sins in our children; we must take care. In the new strength that he received when Isaac was born, Abraham now had another six sons. We do not know much about them; but one was Midian, who became a great and powerful nation and appears several times again in the Bible. The promises made to Abraham of his great growth were being fulfilled. He sent them away to the East so that they would not interfere with the promises made to Isaac.

**Abraham's death:** Abraham lived to a very old age. At last, he died; though he was a very godly man and important in God's plans, yet he died – no man is essential to God and our times will all pass. We must learn to think more about the certainty of our own death, so that we can prepare for it. Yet death is not the end; Abraham was “gathered to his people”; his body was buried by his wife in the land, but his soul continued and went to be with the faithful who had died before him. Now the responsibility to guard and believe the promises passed on to Isaac.

**What have we learnt from Abraham's life:** Abraham is one of the five most important people before Christ came (with Adam, Noah, Moses, David), mentioned 280 times in the Bible. He is a hero of the faith, though his faith had flaws. He is an example to us of saving faith – he believed God above all. He is the father of the nation of Israel, as well as of Edom and Midian (and we also learn where Moab and Ammon came from). The church began with Abraham – with him, God began to have a called-out family in the world. He received the covenant of circumcision, and he met Melchizedek the great king-priest who was a shadow of Christ. His God is our God, and we should learn to have the same faith as him. Abraham rejoiced to see the day of Jesus by faith (John 8:55); we too should look with the same faith to Christ.