

Muhammad Ali, 'The Greatest of All Time', Dead at 74

Muhammad Ali, the silver-tongued boxer and civil rights champion who famously proclaimed himself "The Greatest" and then spent a lifetime living up to the billing, is dead.

Ali died Friday at a Phoenix-area hospital, where he had spent the past few days being treated for respiratory complications, a family spokesman confirmed to NBC News. He was 74.

"After a 32-year battle with Parkinson's disease, Muhammad Ali has passed away at the age of 74. The three-time World Heavyweight Champion boxer died this evening," Bob Gunnell, a family spokesman, told NBC News.

He had said [After Hajj](#):

"I have had many nice moments in my life. But the feelings I had while standing on Mount Arafat (just outside Makka, Saudi Arabia) on the day of the Hajj (the Muslim pilgrimage), was the most unique. I felt exalted by the indescribable spiritual atmosphere there as over one and a half million pilgrims invoked God to forgive them for their sins and bestow on them His choicest blessings."