

Deuteronomy 10:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Analysis

Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons—the exact number recorded in Genesis 46:27 and Exodus 1:5. The Hebrew shiv'im nefesh (שְׁבָעִים נֶפֶשׁ) literally means 'seventy souls,' emphasizing the smallness of Jacob's household. **Now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude**—fulfilling God's covenant promise to Abraham (Genesis 15:5). The census in Numbers 1:46 recorded 603,550 fighting men, suggesting a total population over two million.

This verse climaxes Moses's rehearsal of God's faithfulness (10:12-22). From seventy to millions in four centuries demonstrates God's power to multiply what He blesses. The astronomical metaphor recalls both Abraham's promise and the impossibility of the fulfillment apart from divine intervention. Israel's existence itself was proof of covenant fidelity.

Historical Context

Moses delivered this sermon circa 1406 BC on the plains of Moab, forty years after the Exodus. The original seventy who went to Egypt (circa 1876 BC) included Jacob's sons and their families during the severe famine. The multiplication occurred during 430 years in Egypt (Exodus 12:40), initially prosperous under Joseph's influence, then oppressive under pharaohs who 'knew not Joseph.'

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's multiplication of Israel from 70 to millions encourage you to trust Him with small beginnings?
2. What 'impossible' promises has God made that require His power, not human effort, to fulfill?
3. How should remembering God's past faithfulness shape your response to current challenges?

Interlinear Text

עַתָּה מִצְבָּה יְמִינְךָ אָבִתֶּךָ יְרֵד וְנִפְשַׁת בְּשֶׁבַע יָמִים
with threescore and ten persons went down Thy fathers into Egypt H6258
H7657 H5315 H3381 H1 H4714

הָשָׁמֶן יְמִינְךָ אָלֹהִים כְּכֹוכָבִים
hath made and now the LORD thy God thee as the stars of heaven H8064
H7760 H3068 H430 H3556

לָרְבָּן:
for multitude H7230

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 46:27 (References Egypt): And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.

Genesis 15:5 (Parallel theme): And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

Exodus 1:5 (References Egypt): And all the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already.

Deuteronomy 1:10 (References God): The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Acts 7:14 (Parallel theme): Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.

Nehemiah 9:23 (Parallel theme): Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it.

Deuteronomy 28:62 (References God): And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

Numbers 26:51 (Parallel theme): These were the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty.