

Genesis 18:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

Analysis

Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the ... This passage is part of the Abrahamic narratives which shift from universal human history to God's particular covenant people. The Abraham cycle (Genesis 12-25) demonstrates God's sovereign election, covenant faithfulness, and the development of faith through testing and promise fulfillment.

Central themes include God's unconditional covenant promises (land, descendants, blessing to nations), the call to faith and obedience, the testing of faith through delays and impossibilities, the contrast between divine promises and human schemes, and God's gracious persistence despite human failures. Abraham emerges as the father of faith whose trust in God's promises becomes the model for all believers (Romans 4, Galatians 3, Hebrews 11).

Theologically, these narratives establish:

1. salvation by grace through faith rather than works
2. covenant as God's gracious initiative binding Himself to His people
3. the necessity of patient trust when promises seem impossible
4. the consequences of attempting to fulfill God's promises through human effort
5. the pattern of divine testing producing mature faith.

The Abraham cycle foreshadows Christ as the ultimate seed through whom blessing extends to all nations (Galatians 3:16).

Historical Context

The patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12-50) reflect the cultural, social, and legal customs of the ancient Near East during the Middle Bronze Age (2000-1500 BCE). Archaeological discoveries including the Mari tablets, Nuzi tablets, and Egyptian records confirm many details: nomadic pastoralism, covenant-making ceremonies, marriage customs, property laws, and international travel patterns described in Genesis.

The cultural practices reflected include: treaty/covenant forms (Genesis 15), bride-price customs (Genesis 24, 29), inheritance laws favoring firstborn sons (Genesis 25, 27), adoption practices (Genesis 15, 30), levirate-type arrangements (Genesis 38), and Egyptian administrative systems (Genesis 41, 47). These parallels confirm Genesis's historical reliability while showing how God worked within ancient cultural frameworks to accomplish His purposes.

For later Israelites, these narratives established their identity as Abraham's descendants, explained their claim to Canaan, justified their possession of Joseph's bones (Exodus 13:19), and provided models of faith despite imperfection. The patriarchs' failures and God's faithfulness encouraged Israel that covenant relationship depended on God's grace rather than human merit. The movement from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt set the stage for the Exodus and conquest narratives.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What theological truths about Divine Visitation emerge from this passage?
2. How can we apply the principles from this passage to contemporary challenges in family, work, or church?
3. In what ways does this narrative foreshadow or typify aspects of Christ's redemptive work?

Interlinear Text

אֵל יְהֹוָה	אֲשֶׁר	וְבָ	לִמְעוֹן	דְּ	זֶבַח	רָ	מִתְּחִזֵּה	הָ	בְּיַפְּלֵל	אֵ
Is	for the LORD	any thing	At the time appointed	I will return						H413
H6381	H3068	H1697	H4150							
בְּנֵי	וְלִשְׁבַּח	הָ	מִתְּחִזֵּה							
unto thee according to the time	of life	and Sarah	shall have a son							
H6256	H2416	H8283	H1121							

Additional Cross-References

Luke 1:37 (Parallel theme): For with God nothing shall be impossible.

Matthew 19:26 (Parallel theme): But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Mark 10:27 (Parallel theme): And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Jeremiah 32:27 (References Lord): Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?

Ephesians 3:20 (Parallel theme): Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Job 42:2 (Parallel theme): I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Philippians 4:13 (Parallel theme): I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Jeremiah 32:17 (References Lord): Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

Romans 4:21 (Parallel theme): And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

Numbers 11:23 (References Lord): And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.

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