

Genesis 18:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Analysis

That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the r... 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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does this verse deepen our understanding of God's character and His relationship with creation?
2. How does this passage challenge modern cultural assumptions about identity, purpose, or morality?
3. How does understanding Christ as the ultimate fulfillment illuminate this passage's meaning?

Interlinear Text

חַל לָהּ	לְךָ	וַעֲשֵׂה הָ	בְּדָבָר	הַזֶּה	לְהַמִּית יֵת
That be far	H0	do	after this manner	H2088	to slay
H2486		H6213	H1697		H4191
כִּצֵּד יֵק	עִם	בְּרָשָׁ ע	וְהֵי הָ	כִּצֵּד יֵק	
and that the righteous	H5973	should be as the wicked	H1961	and that the righteous	
H6662		H7563		H6662	
בְּרָשָׁ ע	חַל לָהּ	לָהּ	הַשֹּׁפֵט	כָּל	
should be as the wicked	That be far	H0	from thee Shall not the Judge	H3605	
H7563	H2486		H8199		
הָאָרֶץ	לֹא	וַעֲשֵׂה הָ	מִשְׁפָּט:		
of all the earth	H3808	do	right		
H776		H6213	H4941		

Additional Cross-References

Job 8:3 (Righteousness): Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?

Job 8:20 (Evil): Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers:

Psalms 58:11 (Righteousness): So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

Deuteronomy 32:4 (Righteousness): He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Psalms 94:2 (Judgment): Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.

Psalms 98:9 (Righteousness): Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (Judgment): For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Malachi 3:18 (Righteousness): Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.