

Genesis 20:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

Analysis

Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou sh... 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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What theological truths about Abraham's Deception emerge from this passage?
2. How should this truth about Divine Protection shape our daily decisions and priorities?
3. In what ways does this narrative foreshadow or typify aspects of Christ's redemptive work?

Interlinear Text

וְעַתָּה הִ	מִשְׁׁבָּת	אֲשֶׁת	בַּאֲישׁ	כִּי	בְּבָבָר
H6258	Now therefore restore	his wife	the man	H3588	for he is a prophet
	H7725	H802	H376		H5030
וְאֵת וְהַ	וַיַּתְפֵּל	בְּעֵדֶךָ	וְחִי הַ	אִם	אַיִלָּה
H1931	and he shall pray	for thee	and thou shalt live	H518	H369
	H6419	H1157	H2421		
מִשְׁׁבָּת	דְּבָרָה	תְּמִימָה וְתִ	תְּמִימָה	אֶת הַ	וְכָל
Now therefore restore	her not know	H3588	die	die	H859
H7725	H3045		H4191	H4191	H3605
אֲשֶׁר	לֹ:				
H834	H0				

Additional Cross-References

Job 42:8 (Prayer): Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.

1 Samuel 7:5 (Prayer): And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.

Hebrews 13:4 (Parallel theme): Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

2 Samuel 24:17 (Prayer): And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

1 Chronicles 16:22 (Prophecy): Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

2 Kings 5:11 (Parallel theme): But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

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