

Genesis 24:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:

Analysis

And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy wa... 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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does this passage reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?
2. How does this passage challenge modern cultural assumptions about identity, purpose, or morality?
3. How does this verse fit into the broader biblical story culminating in Christ?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵלַי	יְהוָה	אֲשֶׁר	הֵתֵהֵל כְּתִי	לִפְנֵי יוֹ	יִשְׁלֶחַ
And he said	H413	unto me The LORD	H834	whom I walk	before	will send
H559		H3068		H1980	H6440	H7971
מֵאֶתְּךָ	אֶתְּךָ	וְהִצֵּל יָחַד	דְּרֶכְךָ	וְלָקַחְתָּ	אִשָּׁה	
his angel	H854	with thee and prosper	thy way	and thou shalt take	a wife	
H4397		H6743	H1870	H3947	H802	
לְבִנִי	מִמִּשְׁפַּחְתִּי	וּמִבֵּית	אָבִי:			
for my son	of my kindred	house	and of my father's			
H1121	H4940	H1004	H1			

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 23:20 (Parallel theme): Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

Psalms 16:8 (References Lord): I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Exodus 33:2 (Parallel theme): And I will send an angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite:

Genesis 17:1 (References Lord): And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Genesis 5:24 (Parallel theme): And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Revelation 22:16 (Parallel theme): I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

Hebrews 1:14 (Parallel theme): Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Psalms 1:3 (Parallel theme): And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Psalms 91:11 (Parallel theme): For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

Genesis 24:7 (References Lord): The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.