

Genesis 26:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

Analysis

And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the... This passage belongs to the Jacob narratives which demonstrate God's sovereign election overriding human merit and the transformation of a deceiver into Israel, the father of the twelve tribes. The Jacob cycle shows how divine purposes advance through flawed individuals whom God graciously transforms.

Key themes include God's sovereign choice ("the older shall serve the younger"), the consequences of deception and family dysfunction, exile and return patterns, wrestling with God leading to blessing, and covenant renewal across generations. Jacob's character development from manipulative deceiver to mature patriarch demonstrates sanctification's lifelong process.

Theologically significant aspects include:

1. divine election based on grace not merit (Romans 9:10-13)
2. God's faithfulness to covenant promises despite human unfaithfulness
3. discipline as evidence of divine love and means of transformation
4. generational patterns of sin requiring divine intervention to break
5. prayer and wrestling with God as legitimate expressions of faith.

Jacob's limp after wrestling God symbolizes how divine encounters leave permanent marks, transforming our approach to life and dependence on God rather than our own cunning.

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. How does this verse contribute to the biblical doctrine of creation, fall, or redemption?
2. How can we apply the principles from this passage to contemporary challenges in family, work, or church?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and the gospel of redemption?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעֲשֵׂה	מֵשֶׁם	וַיַּחֲפֹר	בְּאֶרֶץ	אַחֲרֵה	וְלֹא
And he removed	H8033	from thence and digged	well	another	H3808
	H6275		H875		H312
בְּבָבָל	עַל יָד	לִקְרָב אֹתָהּ	שְׁמָה	רְחוּב וְתָ	
and for that they strove	H5921	not and he called	the name of it	Rehoboth	
	H7378		H8034		H7344
וַיֹּאמֶר	כִּי	עַתָּה	הָרַחַת יְהוָה	לֹא יְהִי	
and he said	H3588	For now	hath made room	the LORD	H0
	H559		H7337		H3068
וְאַתָּה	בָּאָרֶץ				
for us and we shall be fruitful	H6509	in the land	H776		

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 1:7 (Parallel theme): And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

Genesis 17:6 (Parallel theme): And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

Psalms 118:5 (References Lord): I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place.

Genesis 41:52 (Parallel theme): And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

Psalms 4:1 (Parallel theme): Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

Psalms 18:19 (Parallel theme): He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

Genesis 28:3 (Parallel theme): And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

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