

Genesis 28:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Analysis

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a w... 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 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does this passage reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?
2. How should this truth about Stone Pillar shape our daily decisions and priorities?
3. How does understanding Christ as the ultimate fulfillment illuminate this passage's meaning?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּצַו הוּא אֶת יוֹבֵב בֶּן־רֵיָה וְיַעֲקֹב בֶּן־רֵיָה וְיִצְחָק בֶּן־רֵיָה וְיִקְרָא א
called And Isaac H413 Jacob and blessed H853 him and charged
H7121 H3327 H3290 H1288 H6680
מִבְּנוֹת הַחֵת וְאִשָּׁה לָקַח לוֹ וְיִי אֶמָּר
him and said H0 H3808 unto him Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters
H559 H3947 H802 H1323
בְּנֵי־עַן:
of Canaan
H3667

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 24:3 (Parallel theme): And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

Genesis 27:46 (Parallel theme): And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

Genesis 24:37 (Parallel theme): And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell:

Genesis 6:2 (Parallel theme): That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

Genesis 49:28 (Blessing): All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

Genesis 27:4 (Blessing): And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

Genesis 48:15 (Blessing): And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

Genesis 34:16 (Parallel theme): Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

Genesis 34:9 (Parallel theme): And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.

Deuteronomy 33:1 (Blessing): And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.