

Genesis 28:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;

Analysis

When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from... 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

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does understanding this verse shape our doctrine of humanity, sin, or salvation?
2. How should this truth about Stone Pillar shape our daily decisions and priorities?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and the gospel of redemption?

Interlinear Text

אָתָּה	יִצְחָק	בָּבָרֶכֶת	וְ	עָשָׂה	וְ	יִרְאָה	יָרַא
saw	When Esau	H3588	from thence and that as he blessed		that Isaac	H853	
H7200	H6215			H1288		H3327	
יְשַׁלַּח	וְיִשְׁלַחְתָּ	וְ	אֶת	פָּקַד	תְּמַלֵּךְ	תְּמַלֵּךְ	
Jacob	and sent him away	H853		H0	to Padanaram	Thou shalt not take	
H3290	H7971				H6307	H3947	
אֲשֶׁר	מִשְׁמָרֶת	וְ	בָּבָרֶכֶת	וְ	אָתָּה	וְ	
H0	H8033		a wife	from thence and that as he blessed	H853		
	H802			H1288			
אֲשֶׁר	הַנִּזְנֵן	וְ	תְּמַלֵּךְ	תְּמַלֵּךְ	אֲשֶׁר	הַנִּזְנֵן	
him	he gave him a charge	H5921	say	H3808	Thou shalt not take	a wife	
H6680			H559	H3947		H802	
מִצְעָן:	מִבְנֵן וְתַ						
of the daughters	of Canaan	H3667					
H1323							

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 28:1 (Blessing): 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.

Genesis 27:33 (Blessing): And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

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