

Genesis 30:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

Analysis

And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.... 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 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What does this passage reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?
2. What specific changes in thinking or behavior does this verse call us to make?

3. What connections can we trace from this verse to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּזְכֹּר	אֱלֹהֵי יִם	אֶת	רַחֵל	וַשְׁמָע	אֶל יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֵי יִם
remembered	And God	H853	Rachel	hearkened	H413	And God
H2142	H430		H7354	H8085		H430
וַתִּפְתָּח	אֶת	בֶּחֶמָהּ:				
to her and opened	H853	her womb				
H6605		H7358				

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 29:31 (Parallel theme): And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.

Genesis 8:1 (References God): And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged;

Genesis 30:2 (References God): And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?

Psalms 105:42 (Parallel theme): For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant.

Psalms 113:9 (Parallel theme): He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

Genesis 25:21 (Parallel theme): And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Psalms 127:3 (Parallel theme): Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

