

Genesis 30:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me.

Analysis

So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy f... 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 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does understanding this verse shape our doctrine of humanity, sin, or salvation?
2. What obstacles prevent us from living out the truths presented in this verse?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and the gospel of redemption?

Interlinear Text

אֶעֱנֶתָהּ answer H6030	בִּי H0	צְדִיקָתִי So shall my righteousness H6666	בִּי וּמִן for me in time H3117	מָה רַק to come H4279	כִּי H3588	
וְתָבֹא when it shall come H935	עַל H5921	שְׂכָרִי for my hire H7939	לִפְנֵי יְיָ before thy face H6440	כָּל every one H3605	אֲשֶׁר H834	אֵינָנוּ H369
וְלֹא that is not speckled H5348	וְטָלָהּ and spotted H2921	בְּעֵז יָמִים among the goats H5795	וְחֹרֹם and brown H2345	בְּכֶשֶׁב יָמִים among the sheep H3775		
וְגָנֹב that shall be counted stolen H1589		וְהָיָה H1931	אֶתִּי H854			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 59:12 (Parallel theme): For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them;

Psalms 37:6 (Righteousness): And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

Exodus 13:14 (Parallel theme): And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage:

Genesis 31:37 (Parallel theme): Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

1 Samuel 26:23 (Righteousness): The LORD render to every man his righteousness and his faithfulness: for the LORD delivered thee into my hand to day, but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed.

2 Samuel 22:21 (Righteousness): The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org