

Genesis 30:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.

Analysis

And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camel... 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

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

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 understanding Christ as the ultimate fulfillment illuminate this passage's meaning?

Interlinear Text

זִקְרָעַנְתִּי	וְאֵלֶּא	מְאֹד	מְאֹד	לֹא	צָאָן
increased	And the man	exceedingly	exceedingly	H1961	H0
H6555	H376	H3966	H3966		
בָּתְהָלָת	וְשָׁפְחוֹת	לְעָבָדִים	וְגַםְלִים	תְּהִמְרִים:	כְּבָתָת
and had much	and maidservants	and menservants	and camels	and asses	
H7227	H8198	H5650	H1581	H2543	

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 30:30 (Parallel theme): For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?

Genesis 24:35 (Parallel theme): And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses.

Genesis 13:2 (Parallel theme): And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

Ecclesiastes 2:7 (Parallel theme): I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:

Genesis 32:10 (Parallel theme): I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

Genesis 12:16 (Parallel theme): And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

Genesis 28:15 (Parallel theme): And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

Genesis 33:11 (Parallel theme): Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.

Genesis 31:42 (Parallel theme): Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

Ezekiel 39:10 (Parallel theme): So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD.

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