

Genesis 45:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:

Analysis

And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons w... This passage is part of the Joseph narrative, a masterfully crafted account demonstrating God's sovereign providence working through human choices and circumstances to accomplish His redemptive purposes. The Joseph cycle shows how God transforms evil intentions into instruments of salvation.

Central themes include divine providence orchestrating events toward redemptive ends, the testing and refinement of character through suffering and success, forgiveness overcoming betrayal and injustice, and the preservation of God's covenant people through famine. Joseph's rise from slavery to second-in-command of Egypt illustrates how God exalts the humble and uses seeming disasters for ultimate good.

Theologically, these chapters reveal:

1. God's meticulous sovereignty over all events, even evil human actions
2. suffering as preparation for future service rather than punishment
3. forgiveness as reflecting divine character and enabling reconciliation
4. God's covenant faithfulness across generations ensuring the survival and blessing of His people

5. how present suffering gains meaning when viewed from the perspective of God's larger purposes.

Joseph's words "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (50:20) epitomize biblical theodicy and providence.

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 this verse contribute to the biblical doctrine of creation, fall, or redemption?
2. What specific changes in thinking or behavior does this verse call us to make?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and the gospel of redemption?

Interlinear Text

אָשָׁר	יְוִיָּס	רַ	דְּבָרִ	כָּל	אֵת	אֲלֵי	דִּבְרֵי	דִּבְרֵי	יְוִיָּס	רַ	דְּבָרִ	
And they told		H413		H853	H3605		him all the words	of Joseph		H834		
		H1696					H1697		H3130			
אָשָׁר	בְּ	עֲגָלָה	וְ	דְּבָרִ			וְ	אָשָׁר	בְּ	עֲגָלָה	וְ	
And they told		H413			unto them and when he saw		H853	the wagons		H834		
		H1696			H7200				H5699			
בְּ	לִשְׁאָת	וְ	אֲלֵי	מְ	דְּבָרִ		וְ	אָשָׁר	בְּ	עֲגָלָה	וְ	
had sent	of Joseph		to carry			H853	revived	him the spirit				
H7971	H3130		H5375				H2421	H7307		H3290		
אָבִיכֶם:												
their father												
		H1										

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 57:15 (Spirit): For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Genesis 45:19 (Parallel theme): Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

Psalms 85:6 (Parallel theme): Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?

Hosea 6:2 (Parallel theme): After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

1 Samuel 30:12 (Spirit): And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights.

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