

Genesis 50:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.

Analysis

And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a g... 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

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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. How should this truth about Joseph's Death shape our daily decisions and priorities?
3. In what ways does this narrative foreshadow or typify aspects of Christ's redemptive work?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּבֹאוּ	עַד	גֶּרְן	הָאֶטָד	אֲשֶׁר	בְּעֵבֶר
And they came	H5704	to the threshingfloor	of Atad	H834	which is beyond
H935		H1637	H329		H5676
יַרְדֵּן	וַיִּסְפְּדוּ	שָׁם	מִסְפַּד	גָּדוֹל	וַיְכֻיֵּם
Jordan	and there they mourned	H8033	lamentation	with a great	sore
H3383	H5594		H4553	H1419	H3515
וְאֵל	וַיַּעַשׂ	לְאָבִיו	אֵל	שִׁבְעַת	יָמִים
and very	and he made	for his father	a mourning	seven	days
H3966	H6213	H1	H60	H7651	H3117

Additional Cross-References

Acts 8:2 (Creation): And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

Job 2:13 (Parallel theme): So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

2 Samuel 1:17 (Parallel theme): And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son:

1 Samuel 31:13 (Parallel theme): And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

Genesis 50:4 (Parallel theme): And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,

Genesis 50:11 (Parallel theme): And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abel-mizraim, which is beyond Jordan.

Deuteronomy 1:1 (Parallel theme): These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red sea, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab.

Deuteronomy 34:8 (Parallel theme): And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

Numbers 19:11 (Parallel theme): He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.