

Genesis 50:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Analysis

And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this l... 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

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does this passage reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?
2. What obstacles prevent us from living out the truths presented in this verse?
3. In what ways does this narrative foreshadow or typify aspects of Christ's redemptive work?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	יֹסֵף	אֶל	אֶחָיו	אֲנֹכִי	יָמֹת	יְהוָה
said	And Joseph	H413	unto his brethren	H595	I die	and God
H559	H3130		H251		H4191	H430
וַיָּבֹאוּ	וַיִּפְקְדוּ	אֶתְּךָ	וְהוֹצֵא	אֶתְּכֶם	מִן	הָאָרֶץ
visit	visit	H853	you and bring you out	H853	H4480	of this land
H6485	H6485		H5927			H776
הַזֹּאת	אֶל	הָאָרֶץ	אֲשֶׁר	נִשְׁבַּע	לְאַבְרָהָם	לְיִצְחָק
H2063	H413	of this land	H834	which he swore	to Abraham	to Isaac
		H776		H7650	H85	H3327
וְלְיַעֲקֹב:						
and to Jacob						
H3290						

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 35:12 (References Abraham): And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

Genesis 26:3 (References Abraham): Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father;

Genesis 28:13 (References God): And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

Genesis 48:21 (References God): And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

Genesis 46:4 (Parallel theme): I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

Genesis 15:18 (Parallel theme): In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

Genesis 13:17 (Parallel theme): Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

Genesis 13:15 (Parallel theme): For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

Genesis 15:7 (Parallel theme): And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

Genesis 12:7 (Parallel theme): And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.