

Jeremiah 31:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest.

Analysis

This verse evokes the Exodus, when Israel escaped Pharaoh's sword and found grace in the wilderness at Sinai. The remnant that survives Babylon's sword will experience a new exodus, finding grace in their own wilderness journey. The phrase 'even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest' points to the Promised Land, the place of rest God gave His people after wilderness wandering (Deuteronomy 12:9-10; Joshua 21:44).

The theological point is that God's redemptive pattern repeats: salvation from judgment (escaped the sword), grace in the wilderness (sustained during transition), and rest in the promised inheritance (secure dwelling with God). This pattern applies to the Exodus, the return from Babylon, and ultimately to Christian salvation. Believers have escaped God's wrath through Christ (the sword of judgment), are sustained by grace through this wilderness life, and await final rest in the new creation (Hebrews 4:9-11).

The phrase 'found grace' emphasizes that God's favor is discovered, not earned. The remnant does not deserve restoration—they are recipients of judgment, survivors only by grace. This establishes that all God's saving work flows from His unmerited favor, not human merit. Paul's doctrine of justification by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9) has deep Old Testament roots in passages like this.

Historical Context

The parallel to the Exodus was deliberate. Just as God delivered Israel from Egypt through Moses, He would deliver the remnant from Babylon. But the new exodus would surpass the old (23:7-8). The return under Cyrus was partial fulfillment, but the ultimate new exodus came through Christ, who led His people out of slavery to sin and death into the freedom and rest of the kingdom of God.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the Exodus pattern (deliverance-wilderness-rest) help us understand Christian salvation and the Christian life?
2. What does it mean to 'find grace' in the wilderness seasons of life—times of transition, difficulty, and uncertainty?
3. In what ways is Christ the fulfillment of the Exodus pattern, leading His people to ultimate rest?

Interlinear Text

כֹּה	אָמַר	יְהוָה	מָצָא	חֵן	בַּמִּדְבָּר	עַם
H3541	Thus saith	the LORD	found	grace	in the wilderness	The people
	H559	H3068	H4672	H2580	H4057	H5971
שְׁנֵי יָדַי	חֶרֶב	הָלַךְ	וְ	לְהַרְגִיעוֹ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	
which were left	of the sword	when I went	to cause him to rest	even Israel		
H8300	H2719	H1980	H7280	H3478		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 95:11 (Parallel theme): Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

Numbers 10:33 (References Lord): And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.

Matthew 11:28 (Parallel theme): Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Deuteronomy 1:33 (Parallel theme): Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.

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