

Joshua 24:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

Analysis

I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood (וָאֶקַח אֶת־אֲבִיכֶם מֵעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר)—God's rehearsal of redemptive history begins with Abraham's call from me-ever ha-nahar (מֵעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר, from beyond the River), referring to the Euphrates. The verb laqach (לָקַח, to take) emphasizes God's sovereign initiative—Abraham did not seek God; God took Abraham. This counters merit-based religion: salvation originates in divine election, not human decision.

Led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed—the verb olech (to lead/walk) with the causative form indicates God personally guided Abraham's wanderings through Canaan. The promise of multiplied zera (זֶרַע, seed) connects to the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 12:2, 15:5, 17:2). Though Abraham began childless at age 75 and received Isaac at 100, God's promise proved faithful. The singular 'seed' ultimately points to Christ (Galatians 3:16), through whom all nations receive blessing.

Historical Context

Abraham's call from Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 11:31-12:1) occurred around 2091 BC, approximately 700 years before Joshua's address. 'Beyond the River' (Euphrates) was the standard biblical designation for Mesopotamia. Joshua's audience included descendants not only through Isaac and Jacob but also Gentile converts who joined Israel (Joshua 6:25—Rahab; Exodus 12:38—mixed multitude).

Rehearsing God's gracious initiative reminded Israel that their existence as a nation depended entirely on divine election, not ethnic superiority.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Abraham's call 'from the other side of the River' emphasize salvation by grace alone, not human seeking?
2. What does God's promise to 'multiply seed' reveal about His faithfulness despite human barrenness and impossibility?
3. How does the singular 'seed' given to Abraham point ultimately to Christ and the gospel (Galatians 3:16)?

Interlinear Text

וָאֶקַח And I took H3947	אֶת H853	אֲבִיךָ your father H1	אֶת H853	אַבְרָהָם Abraham H85	מֵעַבֵּר from the other side H5676	הַנָּהָר of the flood H5104
וְאֵל H1980	אֹת H853	בְּכָל H3605	אֶרֶץ him throughout all the land H776		כְּנָעַן of Canaan H3667	וַיִּבְרַךְ and multiplied H7235
אֶת H853	זַרְעוֹ his seed H2233	וַיִּתֵּן and gave H5414	לֹא H0	אֶת H853	יִצְחָק him Isaac H3327	
