

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 (אֶקַח אֶת-אָבִיכֶם)—God's rehearsal of redemptive history begins with Abraham's call from me-ever ha-nahar (מעבר הַנָּהָר, from beyond the River), referring to the Euphrates. The verb laqach (לְקַח, 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 (זָרָע, 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

רְנֵבֶת מִעַד בָּרָךְ אֶת אָבִיךָ מִן אֶת־אֶקְעָנָה
And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood

H3947 H853 H1 H85 H85 H5676 H5104

תִּרְבַּתְּנֵה כִּתְעֵל אֶצְזָב אֶת־כָּל־אֶזְתָּה וְתִּאְלֵל־הָרָקָב
him throughout all the land of Canaan and multiplied

H1980 H853 H3605 H776 H3667 H7235

אֶת־אֶת־יְהֻעָד וְאֶת־יְהֻעָנֵל אֶת־לְבִנְךָ אֶת־יְהֻעָקֹב
his seed and gave him Isaac

H853 H2233 H5414 H0 H853 H3327