

Numbers 21:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:

Analysis

Israel sang: 'Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it.' This spontaneous worship celebrated God's provision of water in the wilderness. The Hebrew 'ali' (spring up/ascend) personifies the well, calling water forth. This joyful song contrasts sharply with earlier complaints about water (Ex 15:24, 17:1-7, Num 20:2-5), showing spiritual progress in the new generation. Corporate worship expresses faith and gratitude, turning God's gifts into occasions for praise. Paul commands similar worship: 'in every thing give thanks' (1 Thess 5:18). The well dug by princes with their staves (v.18) suggests willing cooperation with God's provision, combining divine gift with human participation.

Historical Context

This song came after God commanded Moses to gather the people for water provision at Beer (meaning 'well,' v.16). Unlike previous water miracles requiring Moses' action (Ex 17:6, Num 20:11), here the leaders dug the well and water came - demonstrating growth in faith and participation. The song possibly became a traditional Israelite hymn, preserved in 'the book of the wars of the LORD' (v.14), a lost collection of songs and accounts from wilderness period. The incident shows progression from miraculous intervention to providential working through natural means - maturity in faith recognizes God's hand in both spectacular and ordinary provisions.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. Do you worship God for everyday provisions, or only for dramatic interventions?
2. How does your worship life reflect spiritual maturity and gratitude versus a complaining spirit?

Interlinear Text

עָנוּ בָּאָרֶץ עַלְיָהוּ בְּאָרֶץ אֶשְׁרָא לְאַתָּה יְשַׁרְאָלְהָיְהָ אַתָּה
H227 sang Then Israel H853 this song H2063 Spring up O well sing
H7891 H3478 H7892 H5927 H875 H6030

לְהָ:

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