

Numbers 24:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the LORD hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters.

Analysis

The agricultural metaphors—'As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river's side, as the trees of lign aloes which the LORD hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters'—picture abundance, fruitfulness, and permanence. The Hebrew imagery moves from horizontal spread (valleys, gardens) to vertical height (aloes, cedars), showing complete blessing. The phrase 'which the LORD hath planted' establishes that Israel's flourishing comes from divine cultivation, not human effort. This anticipates Jesus' metaphor of the vine (John 15:5)—fruitfulness flows from abiding in Him.

Historical Context

These metaphors would resonate powerfully with Balak viewing Israel from drought-prone Moab. Water imagery symbolized life and prosperity in the arid Near East. The comparison to cedars of Lebanon (the region's most majestic trees) and aromatic aloes indicated nobility and value. Balaam's oracle prophesied Israel's future prosperity in Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's planting ensure His people's fruitfulness versus self-effort?
2. What does it mean to be rooted by streams of water in a spiritual sense?
3. How should believers cultivate dependence on God for spiritual fruitfulness?

Interlinear Text

כָּתַל יְמִין	עַל י	כִּנְגָּה תְּ	נַטְעַת	נַטְעַת רַבְּ
As the valleys	are they spread forth	as gardens	H5921	by the river's side
H5158	H5186	H1593		H5104
פְּאָגָלִים	עַל	יְהִי הָ	נַטְעַת	עַל
as the trees of lign aloes	hath planted	which the LORD	and as cedar trees	H5921
H174	H5193	H3068	H730	
מִימָּן:				
beside the waters				
H4325				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 1:3 (Parallel theme): And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Psalms 104:16 (References Lord): The trees of the LORD are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted;

Isaiah 58:11 (References Lord): And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.