

Acts 17:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

Analysis

And hath made of one blood all nations of men (ἐξ ἐνὸς αἵματος πᾶν ἔθνος, ex henos haimatos pan ethnōs)—Paul declares the fundamental unity of humanity from a single origin. The Greek ex henos ('from one') affirms monogenesis, refuting both Greek theories of racial superiority and any hierarchy among nations. This devastates the Athenian pride in autochthony (belief they sprang from Attic soil).

Hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation (όρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὄροθεσίας, horisas prostetagmenous kairous kai tas horothesias)—God's sovereignty extends to human history and geography. Prostetagmenous kairous ('appointed seasons') refers to the rise and fall of civilizations, while horothesias ('boundaries') indicates territorial limits. Paul presents divine providence governing nations, not blind fate or human autonomy—a direct challenge to Stoic determinism and Epicurean randomness.

Historical Context

Paul delivered this sermon on the Areopagus (Mars Hill) in Athens around AD 50-51, addressing both Stoic and Epicurean philosophers (Acts 17:18). Athens prided itself on cultural superiority and autochthonous origin. Paul's declaration of common descent and divine sovereignty over nations directly confronted Greek

philosophical assumptions about racial hierarchy, fate, and the gods' relationship to humanity.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the truth that all humanity shares 'one blood' challenge modern forms of racial or ethnic pride?
2. In what ways do you see God's sovereignty in 'appointed times and boundaries' working through current geopolitical realities?

Interlinear Text

ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἐνὸς αἵματός πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων
hath made And of one blood all nations of men
G4160 G5037 G1537 G1520 G129 G3956 G1484 G444

κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ προσώπον τῆς γῆς
for to dwell on all the face of the earth
G2730 G1909 G3956 G4383 G3588 G1093

όρισας προτεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς
and hath determined before appointed the times and G3588
G3724 G4384 G2540 G2532

όροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν
the bounds habitation of their
G3734 G2733 G846

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 3:20 (Parallel theme): And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

Malachi 2:10 (Creation): Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

1 Corinthians 15:22 (Creation): For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

1 Corinthians 15:47 (Parallel theme): The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

Psalms 31:15 (Parallel theme): My times are in thy hand: deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

Job 14:5 (Parallel theme): Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

Job 12:23 (Parallel theme): He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and straiteneth them again.

Genesis 9:19 (Parallel theme): These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.

Daniel 11:35 (Parallel theme): And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.