

Daniel 10:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord?
for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me,
neither is there breath left in me.

Analysis

Daniel expresses complete inadequacy: 'For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.' This emphasizes the gap between divine and human: even strengthened, Daniel feels unable to converse with the glorious being. The rhetorical question 'how can the servant...talk with this my lord?' expresses wonder that communication is possible at all. The physical symptoms—no strength, no breath—indicate complete depletion. This teaches that divine-human encounter bridges an infinite gap, requiring divine initiative and grace. The encounter exhausts human capacity while revealing God's gracious accommodation. Reformed theology emphasizes this: revelation is divine condescension; God stoops to communicate with creatures who cannot reach Him.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern peoples understood hierarchy—subjects approached kings with fear, servants addressed masters carefully, humans approached gods with elaborate rituals. Yet biblical revelation presents intimate divine-human communication: God speaks to Moses 'face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend' (Exodus 33:11); angels converse with humans; the divine Word becomes flesh dwelling among us (John 1:14). This accessibility doesn't diminish divine transcendence but demonstrates divine grace. God could remain entirely transcendent and unknown; instead He reveals Himself, bridges the gap, and

enables relationship. Daniel's amazement at conversing with the glorious messenger reflects this theological marvel: the infinite God communicates with finite creatures through gracious accommodation.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does Daniel's wonder at being able to speak with the divine messenger teach about revelation's grace?
2. How does the infinite gap between divine and human require not just initial but continual divine accommodation?
3. Why is complete human depletion during divine encounter appropriate and healthy?

Interlinear Text

אֵדָנִי	עִמָּד	לְדַבֵּר	אֵדָנִי	עִבְדְּךָ	יֻכַּל	וְהֵיכָן
of this my lord	talk		of this my lord	the servant	can	For how
H113	H1696		H2088	H5650	H3201	H1963
כֹּחַ	בִּי	יֻעַמַד	לֹא	יָמַעַתָּה	וְאֵנִי	הֵיכָן
no strength		there remained		for as for me straightway		
H3581	H0	H5975	H3808	H6258	H589	H2088
בִּי	נִשְׁאַכָּה	לֹא	וְנִשְׁמָה			
	left		in me neither is there breath			
H0	H7604	H3808	H5397			

