

Daniel 2:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

Analysis

God 'changeth the times and the seasons' demonstrates sovereignty over history. Hebrew 'iddan (times) and zeman (seasons) together encompass chronological progression and appointed moments. God isn't merely eternal but actively governs temporal affairs. 'He removeth kings, and setteth up kings' directly addresses Daniel's situation under Nebuchadnezzar—even this pagan emperor rules only by divine permission. This profound political theology declares no human authority exists except by God's decree (cf. Romans 13:1). The verse's second half focuses on revelation: God 'giveth wisdom unto the wise' and 'knowledge to them that know understanding,' showing He sovereignly distributes insight.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern peoples attributed political changes to divine activity, but polytheism meant competing gods controlled different spheres. Daniel's monotheism declares one God sovereignly directs all historical developments. The rise and fall of kings—central concern for court officials—lies entirely in Yahweh's hands, not fate, astrology, or competing deities. This radical claim would be verified through Daniel's lifetime witnessing Babylonian, Median, and Persian kingdoms.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does God's sovereignty over kings and kingdoms provide comfort when political situations seem chaotic or threatening?
2. What does God's control over 'times and seasons' teach about His purposeful direction of history toward appointed ends?

Interlinear Text

הוא H1932	מְהִשֵּׁן א H8133	עֲדָנָיָא H5732	וְזִמְנֵי א H2166	מְהַעֲדֵה H5709	מֶלֶךְ יִן H4430
	And he changeth	the times	and the seasons	he removeth	kings
וּמַהֲקֵי יָם H6966	מֶלֶךְ יִן H4430	יְהִי ב H3052	חִכְמָתָא H2452	לְחִכְמֵי יִן H2445	וּמִנְדָּעָא H4486
and setteth up	kings	he giveth	wisdom	unto the wise	and knowledge
לִידְעָ י H3046	בִּינָה: H999				
to them that know	understanding				

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 4:17 (Kingdom): This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that

the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

Daniel 7:25 (Parallel theme): And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

Daniel 4:32 (Kingdom): And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

Job 12:18 (Kingdom): He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

James 1:5 (Parallel theme): If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

Luke 21:15 (Parallel theme): For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

1 Kings 4:29 (Parallel theme): And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.

1 Kings 3:28 (Kingdom): And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment.

Daniel 2:9 (Parallel theme): But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof.

Exodus 31:3 (Parallel theme): And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,