

Daniel 4:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing:
and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and
among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his
hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Analysis

The king's theological declaration demonstrates transformed understanding: 'And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?' This radical theology relativizes all human importance ('reputed as nothing') while asserting absolute divine sovereignty. God exercises will among both heavenly beings ('army of heaven') and earthly dwellers. The rhetorical question 'none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?' affirms God's freedom from human accountability. This comes from one who learned through bitter experience that human pride cannot resist divine purposes.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern theology typically portrayed gods as powerful but constrained by cosmic forces, other deities, or fate. Nebuchadnezzar's declaration transcends pagan categories—God operates with complete freedom, unlimited by external constraints. The 'army of heaven' likely refers to angelic beings (cf. 1 Kings 22:19). Mesopotamian religion included complex hierarchies of deities and divine beings. The king now confesses one God who commands both supernatural and natural realms without limitation or accountability to any higher power.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing humans as 'reputed as nothing' in comparison to God free us from pride while establishing true dignity as dependent on Him?
2. What does God's freedom from human accountability teach about trust—accepting His sovereignty even when we don't understand His purposes?

Interlinear Text

וְכָל	וּדְאָרֵי י	אֶרֶץ א	וְלֹא א	חֲשִׁיבֵי ין			
And all	and among the inhabitants	of the earth	and none	are reputed			
H3606	H1753	H772	H3809	H2804			
וּבְמִצְבֵּי ה	עֹבְדֹתַי:	בְּיָדֵי יל	שָׁמַי א	וּדְאָרֵי י			
according to his will	and he doeth	in the army	of heaven	and among the inhabitants			
H6634	H5648	H2429	H8065	H1753			
אֶרֶץ א	וְלֹא א	אֵיתִי	דִּי	יָמֵה א	בְּיַד ה	וְאִם אֵל	לֵה
of the earth	and none	can	H1768	stay	his hand	or say	H0
H772	H3809	H383		H4223	H3028	H560	
מֶה ה	עֹבְדֹתַי:						
unto him What	and he doeth						
H4101	H5648						

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 135:6 (Parallel theme): Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

Psalms 115:3 (Parallel theme): But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

Job 42:2 (Parallel theme): I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Ephesians 1:11 (Parallel theme): In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Isaiah 43:13 (Parallel theme): Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?

Acts 4:28 (Parallel theme): For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Job 40:2 (Parallel theme): Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

Job 23:13 (Parallel theme): But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.

1 Corinthians 10:22 (Parallel theme): Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

1 Corinthians 2:16 (Parallel theme): For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.