

Deuteronomy 30:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

Analysis

It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? The rhetorical question eliminates the excuse that God's law is too transcendent or distant to access. Israel need not send someone to heaven to retrieve divine revelation - God has already brought it down through Moses.

This addresses human tendency to create unnecessary obstacles to obedience. People often claim they would obey if only God made His will clearer or more accessible. This verse demolishes such excuses - God has clearly revealed His requirements.

The hypothetical who shall go up for us suggests desire for mediator or proxy to access divine will. But God has already provided revelation through Moses, eliminating need for additional mediators in the old covenant context.

Paul applies this to Christ's incarnation - Christ already came down from heaven (Romans 10:6). We need not accomplish impossible feats; God has done the impossible by sending His Son.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern mythology featured heroes ascending to heaven or gods descending to earth to obtain divine secrets. Israel needed no such dramatic quests - God gave His law directly through Moses at Sinai.

The accessibility of God's revelation contrasted with pagan religions' inaccessible divine realm, demonstrating God's condescension to make Himself known.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What excuses does this rhetorical question eliminate?
2. How do people create unnecessary obstacles to obedience?
3. What does this teach about God's initiative in revelation?
4. How does Paul apply this to Christ's incarnation?
5. Why is God's condescension in revelation crucial for covenant relationship?

Interlinear Text

אַל תֹּאמֶר לְאַמְתָּה בְּשָׁמְךָ יְמָה
H3808 It is not in heaven H1931 that thou shouldest say H4310 Who shall go up
H8064 H559 H5927

אַל תֹּאמֶר לְאַמְתָּה בְּשָׁמְךָ יְמָה
H0 It is not in heaven H8064 and bring H3947 H0 it unto us that we may hear H8085 H853

וְעֹשֶׂה:
it and do
H6213

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 30:4 (Parallel theme): Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

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