

Deuteronomy 4:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

Analysis

Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

Moses moves from historical recitation to present application with *veyada'ta hayom* (בְּיֹמָה יְדַעַת, 'know today'). The command is immediate—not eventual understanding but present appropriation. The verb *vahashevota* (וְשָׁבַת, 'consider/return to heart') requires more than intellectual acknowledgment; truth must descend from head to heart, becoming the settled conviction that shapes all of life.

The scope of Yahweh's sovereignty is total: *bashamayim mima'al ve'al ha'arets mitachat* (בָּשָׁמָיִם מִמְּאֹל וְעַל מִתְחַת, 'in heaven above and on earth beneath'). No realm escapes His rule. Canaanite religion divided the cosmos among competing deities—Baal ruled weather, Mot ruled death, El presided over the pantheon. Moses demolishes this fragmentation: Yahweh alone governs all reality.

The concluding *ein od* (אֵין עָד, 'there is none else') echoes verse 35 and anticipates Isaiah's declarations (Isaiah 45:5-6, 18, 22). This is not merely theoretical monotheism but practical exclusivism—Yahweh alone deserves worship, trust, and obedience because He alone possesses divine power and authority. Knowing this transforms how we pray (to the only God who can act), how we trust (in the only God who controls outcomes), and how we worship (giving ultimate allegiance to no competitor).

Historical Context

Moses calls Israel to internalize monotheism—that Yahweh alone is God 'in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath.' This total claim over all reality contrasted with Canaanite religion that divided authority among many gods. As Israel prepared to enter Canaan around 1406 BC, this exclusive devotion to Yahweh was essential.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to 'consider in your heart' rather than merely know intellectually that the LORD is God?
2. How should the truth that God rules 'in heaven above and on earth beneath' shape your prayers and decisions?

Interlinear Text

יְדַעַת	תְּדַעַת	יְהִי	וּמָ	וְיִהְיֶה	וְיִהְשְׁבַת	אֶל	וְיִהְשְׁבַת	לְבָבְךָ	כִּי
Know	therefore this day		and consider		H413	it in thine heart		H3588	
H3045	H3117		H7725			H3824			
that the LORD		is	the LORD	is		in heaven	above		
H3068	H1931		H430	H8064		H5921	H4605		
and upon the earth									
H776	H8478		H369	H5750					

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 2:11 (References God): And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

Deuteronomy 4:35 (References God): Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him.

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

1 Chronicles 28:9 (References God): And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

2 Chronicles 20:6 (References God): And said, O LORD God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? and rulest not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

1 Chronicles 29:11 (References Lord): Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.

Hosea 7:2 (Parallel theme): And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face.

Deuteronomy 32:29 (Parallel theme): O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!

Daniel 4:35 (Parallel theme): 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?

Isaiah 5:12 (References Lord): And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

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