

Exodus 14:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.

Analysis

God predicts Pharaoh's interpretation: 'They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.' The verb 'entangled' (Hebrew 'buk,' בּעַק—confused, perplexed) pictures Israel as lost wanderers. God orchestrates circumstances to appear as vulnerable foolishness, baiting the enemy into overconfidence. The phrase 'I will harden Pharaoh's heart' shows God controlling even the enemy's response to accomplish redemptive purposes.

Historical Context

Israel's apparent strategic blunder would have emboldened Pharaoh. After releasing them under duress, this seemed an opportunity to recapture his workforce and restore honor.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God sometimes allowing you to appear weak or foolish serve His greater purposes?

2. What does God hardening Pharaoh's heart teach about divine sovereignty over enemy actions?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶת־רַבּוֹת־פְּרֹעָה לְבָנָי יִשְׂרָאֵל נִבְכּוּ יְמֵי הַמִּדְבָּר: בְּאֶרֶץ
will say For Pharaoh of the children of Israel They are entangled H1992
H559 H6547 H1121 H3478 H943
in the land hath shut them in the wilderness H5921 H4057

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