

Ezekiel 10:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked they followed it; they turned not as they went.

Analysis

The wheels' movement 'upon their four sides' without turning demonstrates God's omnidirectional sovereignty. The Hebrew indicates they moved in whatever direction they faced without need for reorientation. This supernatural mobility represents God's providence as unrestricted by creaturely limitations. Where God purposes to go, He goes; what He wills to accomplish, He accomplishes—without hindrance, delay, or need for adjustment.

The phrase 'they turned not as they went' (lo yisavvu belekhtem, לֹא יִסָּבְּבוּ בִּלְעֻכְתֶּם) emphasizes directness and certainty. God's purposes do not require course corrections because He knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:10). This contrasts with human planning, which must constantly adjust to unforeseen circumstances. Divine providence operates with perfect foreknowledge and unchanging purpose.

The head determining the direction of movement illustrates that rationality and purpose govern God's actions. God is not arbitrary or capricious. His judgments, including Israel's exile, follow from His holy character and covenant stipulations. The Reformed doctrine of God's decree teaches that all events, including human choices, occur within the framework of God's eternal, wise, and good plan.

Historical Context

This description of the wheels' movement would have profound implications for the exiles. Ancient worldviews often portrayed divine beings as limited in power or scope, requiring negotiation or appeasement. Ezekiel's vision revealed a God whose sovereignty brooks no limitation or opposition.

The directional language ('they went upon their four sides') encompasses all possibilities—north, south, east, west, and all points between. This universal scope reminded the exiles that Yahweh's authority extended over all nations, including Babylon. Their exile was not evidence of Yahweh's territorial limitation but of His judgment executed through foreign nations that remained under His sovereign control.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's unchanging purpose (not turning as He goes) provide stability in your life?
2. What areas of life do you struggle to believe are truly under God's sovereign control?
3. How should understanding God's perfect foreknowledge shape your prayer life and decision-making?

Interlinear Text

בָּלְכָתָם	אֶל	אַרְבַּ עֵת	רַבְעֵיהֶם	יֵלְכוּ	לֹא	וְהִסְתַּבּוּ
H1980	H413	upon their four	sides	H1980	H3808	it they turned
		H702	H7253			H5437
בָּלְכָתָם	כִּי	הַמָּקוֹם	אֲשֶׁר	יִפְּנוּ	הָרֹאשׁ	אֲחֶיךָ
H1980	H3588	but to the place	H834	looked	whither the head	H310
		H4725		H6437	H7218	
יֵלְכוּ	לֹא	וְהִסְתַּבּוּ	בָּלְכָתָם:			
H1980	H3808	it they turned	H1980			
		H5437				

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 1:17 (Parallel theme): When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went.

Ezekiel 10:22 (Parallel theme): And the likeness of their faces was the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, their appearances and themselves: they went every one straight forward.