

Isaiah 40:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?

Analysis

This series of rhetorical questions establishes God's incomprehensibility and absolute sovereignty over creation. The specific measurements—waters in His hand, heavens by span, dust in a measure—demonstrate that all creation is finite to God, manageable by His infinite power. The Hebrew 'takan' (measured) implies precise ordering, not arbitrary action.

Historical Context

Against Babylonian pride in their cosmological achievements and wisdom, Isaiah declares that Israel's God alone measured and created all things, reducing Babylon's gods to nothing.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does meditating on God's measureless power affect your perspective on your current problems?
2. What aspects of God's character does His role as Creator reveal about His ability to save?

Interlinear Text

מִי H4310	מִדָּד H4058	בְּשֹׁעַל וְ H8168	מַיִם H4325	וְשָׁמַיִם H8064
Who hath measured	in the hollow of his hand	the waters	heaven	
בְּזֵרֶת H2239	וַתִּקַּח H8505	וְכָל H3557	בְּשֹׁלֶשׁ H7991	עָפָר H6083
with the span	and meted out	and comprehended	in a measure	the dust
הָאָרֶץ H776	וְשָׁקָל H8254	בַּפָּלַיִם H6425	הַרֵּי יָם H2022	וּגְבֻעֵי הָאָרֶץ H1389
of the earth	and weighed	in scales	the mountains	and the hills
				וּבַמֶּאֱזָנִים H3976
				in a balance

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?

Isaiah 48:13 (Parallel theme): Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.

Revelation 20:11 (Parallel theme): And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

Job 28:25 (Parallel theme): To make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.

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