

Isaiah 44:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it.

Analysis

The absurdity deepens: the wood for the idol comes from trees God made grow - cypress, oak, ash trees planted by God and watered by rain. The very material used to create false gods comes from the true God's creation. The Hebrew emphasizes divine agency: 'the LORD...doth nourish it.'

Historical Context

This exposes the parasitic nature of idolatry - it depends on the true God's creation while denying Him. The irony that God's rain grows the trees for idols mocks the entire enterprise.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do people use God's gifts to construct substitutes for God Himself?
2. What does it mean that even the materials for false worship come from the true God?

Interlinear Text

לְכַתּוֹת	לֹא	אֶרְזֵי יָם	וְקַח	תְּרִזָּה	וְאֵל אֹן
He heweth him down	H0	cedars	and taketh	the cypress	and the oak
H3772		H730	H3947	H8645	H437
וַיַּצְמֶץ	לֹא	בְעֵצָיו	יָעַר	נֹטַע	
which he strengtheneth	H0	for himself among the trees	of the forest	he planteth	
H553		H6086	H3293	H5193	
אֶן	וְגֶשֶׁם	יַגְדֵּל:			
an ash	and the rain	doth nourish			
H766	H1653	H1431			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 40:20 (Parallel theme): He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved.