

James 3:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

Analysis

Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Great ships, driven by fierce winds, are turned by a very small rudder (pedalion, πηδάλιον) wherever the pilot wills. External pressures (winds) do not determine direction; the rudder does. So the tongue amidst trials determines course.

Reformed perseverance teaches that while believers face storms, Spirit-controlled speech steers them toward perseverance. James aims to shift focus from circumstances to the heart's rudder.

Historical Context

Diaspora believers traveled by sea; shipping analogies were common. Early churches faced slander winds; James taught them to respond with controlled tongues rather than letting pressure dictate ungodly speech.",

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What 'winds' tempt you to lose control of your tongue?
2. How can you keep Christ as pilot of your speech under pressure?
3. Who is influenced by your words during storms?

Interlinear Text

ἰδού, καὶ τὰ πλοῖα τηλικαῦτα ὅντα καὶ ὑπὸ¹
Behold also ^{G3588} the ships ^{G4143} so great ^{G5082} which though they be ^{G5607} also ^{G2532} of ^{G5259}

σκληρῶν ἀνέμων ἐλαυνόμενα μετάγεται ὑπὸ²
fierce ^{G4642} winds ^{G417} are driven ^{G1643} yet are they turned about ^{G3329} of ^{G5259}

ἐλαχίστου πηδαλίου ὅπου ἀν ἡ ὄρμὴ τοῦ
a very small ^{G1646} helm ^{G4079} whithersoever ^{G3699} G302 G3588 listeth ^{G3730} G3588

εὐθύνοντος βούληται

the governor ^{G1014}
G2116

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