

Job 12:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.

Analysis

God leads counselors stripped of wisdom and makes judges fools. The imagery of 'counselors' led away 'spoiled' (or 'barefoot,' signifying captivity) demonstrates God's sovereignty over human institutions. He can overthrow the wise and powerful, exposing their foolishness. This Reformed emphasis on God's meticulous providence shows that no human authority operates independently of divine control.

Historical Context

Counselors and judges held positions of highest authority in ancient societies. Job's point—drawn from observed history—is that God regularly humbles the mighty, as seen in Babylon's conquest of Judah and other historical reversals of fortune.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's sovereignty over human authorities shape our response to earthly powers?

2. When have you seen God humble those who seemed invincible in their wisdom or authority?
3. What does this teach about the temporary nature of human wisdom apart from God?

Interlinear Text

יְהוָה	יִשְׁפֹּט יָם	שׁוֹל ל	יִשְׁפֹּט יָם	יְהוָה:
H1980	counsellors	away spoiled	and maketh the judges	fools
	H3289	H7758	H8199	H1984

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 29:14 (Parallel theme): Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

2 Samuel 17:23 (Parallel theme): And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.