

Job 12:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

Analysis

God removes the authority of kings ('looseth the bond of kings') and binds them with chains around their waists as captives. This continues Job's theme of divine sovereignty over human rulers. The imagery reverses the typical scene—kings who bound others are themselves bound by God's decree. Reformed theology emphasizes God's authority even over kings and kingdoms, fulfilling Daniel's declaration that God 'removeth kings, and setteth up kings' (Daniel 2:21).

Historical Context

Ancient kings wore distinctive girdles or belts as symbols of authority. To have these loosened and replaced with prisoner's bonds represented total reversal of status—a common fate in ancient warfare when defeated monarchs were led captive.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's authority over kings affect how we pray for political leaders?

2. What comfort comes from knowing no earthly ruler operates outside God's control?
3. How should the temporary nature of human power shape our political engagement?

Interlinear Text

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| מוֹסֵר | מֶלֶךְ יָם | פִּתְּחָה | וַיֵּאֵסֶר | אֶזְרוֹר | בְּמַתְּנֵיהֶם: |
| the bond | of kings | He looseth | and girdeth | with a girdle | their loins |
| H4148 | H4428 | H6605 | H631 | H232 | H4975 |

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 2:21 (Kingdom): And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

Psalms 116:16 (Parallel theme): O LORD, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds.