

Job 28:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.

Analysis

After describing wisdom's hiddenness, Job declares: "God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof." The verb bin (בִּנְ), "understandeth") means to discern or perceive deeply. The verb yada (יָדָ, "knoweth") denotes intimate, experiential knowledge. Job affirms divine epistemological privilege—God alone possesses comprehensive understanding of wisdom's nature and location. This resonates with Isaiah 55:8-9: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD." From a Reformed perspective, this grounds the doctrine of divine incomprehensibility—God's knowledge infinitely transcends human understanding. Yet Scripture reveals that God shares wisdom with those who fear Him (verse 28). The New Testament identifies Christ as the one "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). What Job longed for—access to divine wisdom—has been granted through the incarnation.

Historical Context

Ancient wisdom literature (Proverbs, Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon) portrayed wisdom as hidden or personified as existing before creation. Egyptian Ma'at (wisdom/order) was a divine attribute. Job's affirmation that God alone understands wisdom's way parallels Proverbs 8:22-31, where wisdom describes being with God from the beginning. This theological development prepared Israel to receive Christ as God's wisdom incarnate.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does acknowledging God's unique understanding of wisdom cultivate intellectual humility?
2. What is the relationship between divine incomprehensibility and God's self-revelation in Scripture?
3. How does Christ as the wisdom of God answer Job's quest for understanding?

Interlinear Text

אֱלֹהִים	יְعַנְּדֵת	הַבָּדָד	דַּרְכֵה	וְאֵת	עַל	וְיֶדֶת
God	understandeth	the	way	H1931	thereof	and he knoweth
H430	H995		H1870		H3045	H853

מָקוֹם֙

the place

H4725

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 1:30 (References God): But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Romans 11:33 (References God): O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Jude 1:25 (References God): To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Proverbs 2:6 (Parallel theme): For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

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