

Job 34:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.

Analysis

He shall break in pieces mighty men without number (יָרַע כְּבִירִים לֹא־חֶקֶר)—The verb yaro'a means to shatter, break, or crush, depicting violent overthrow. Kabbirim denotes the mighty, powerful, or numerous—those who seem unassailable by human standards. Lo-cheqer (without investigation/number) indicates God needs no lengthy trial or evidence-gathering; His knowledge is immediate and comprehensive. This echoes Daniel 2:21's declaration that God 'removeth kings, and setteth up kings.'

And set others in their stead (וַיַּעַמְד אֲחֵרִים תַּחְתָּם)—The causative verb ya'amed (to cause to stand) shows God's sovereignty extends beyond judgment to appointment of successors. Tachtam (in their place/stead) emphasizes complete replacement. God's government operates independently of human power structures—He deposes and installs rulers according to His purposes. First Samuel 2:7-8 expresses this principle: 'The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.' No earthly might secures position against divine will.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern monarchs claimed divine right and portrayed themselves as eternal, unshakeable powers. Palace inscriptions boasted of permanent dynasties. Elihu's theology directly challenged this ideology, insisting even the mightiest rulers exist at God's pleasure and can be instantly removed. Historical examples

abound: Nebuchadnezzar's humbling (Daniel 4), Belshazzar's fall (Daniel 5), and countless forgotten empires validate this principle.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does this verse speak to contemporary situations where powerful, unjust leaders seem permanently entrenched?
2. What does God's sovereign removal and appointment of leaders teach about engaging in political action versus trusting divine providence?
3. How should this reality shape prayers for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2)?

Interlinear Text

יָרֵעַ	כְּבִירֵי יָם	לֹא	חֵקֶר	וַעֲמִיד	אֲחֵרֵי יָם
He shall break in pieces	mighty men	H3808	without number	and set	others
H7489	H3524		H2714	H5975	H312
תַּחֲתָם:					
H8478					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 94:5 (Parallel theme): They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.

Psalms 72:4 (Parallel theme): He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

Psalms 2:9 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Daniel 2:21 (Parallel theme): 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:

Job 19:2 (Parallel theme): How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?

Job 12:19 (Parallel theme): He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

1 Kings 14:14 (Parallel theme): Moreover the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org