

Job 39:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

Analysis

"Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?" God asks who granted freedom to wild donkeys, using shaphar (שָׁפַר, "send out") and pathach (פָּתַח, "loose/open"). These animals live independently, untamed by humans. God designed some creatures for domestication, others for wildness. This demonstrates divine purpose in diversity—not all creation exists for human use. The wild ass's freedom glorifies God through living according to its created nature.

Historical Context

Domesticated donkeys were essential for ancient economies—burden-bearing, agriculture, transportation. Wild asses (pere, פָּרָא) lived free in deserts, beyond human control. This contrast would challenge anthropocentric views, showing that God values creation beyond its utility to humans.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's design of creatures living beyond human control challenge our need to control everything?
2. What does the existence of wild, untamed creation teach about God's purposes beyond human understanding?

Interlinear Text

מִי שֶׁלַּח פֶּרֶא חֲפֹשׁ וּמִסֵּר וְעַר וְדָמִי
H4310 Who hath sent out the wild ass free the bands of the wild ass H4310
H7971 H6501 H2670 H4147 H6171

פֶּתַח:
or who hath loosed
H6605

Additional Cross-References

Job 11:12 (Parallel theme): For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt.

Job 6:5 (Parallel theme): Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? or loweth the ox over his fodder?

Job 24:5 (Parallel theme): Behold, as wild asses in the desert, go they forth to their work; rising betimes for a prey: the wilderness yieldeth food for them and for their children.

Psalms 104:11 (Parallel theme): They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.