

Job 42:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Analysis

I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Job responds to God's speeches (chapters 38-41) with this profound confession of divine omnipotence and sovereignty. "Thou canst do every thing" (kol tukhal, כֹּל תִּכָּחַל) literally means "all things you are able"—absolute power belongs to God alone. This echoes Genesis 18:14 ("Is any thing too hard for the Lord?") and anticipates Jesus' teaching that with God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).

"No thought can be withholden from thee" translates lo-yibatser mimkha mezimmah (לֹא-יִבָּצֵר מִמְּךָ מְזִמָּה), meaning "no purpose/plan is impossible for you" or "no purpose of yours can be thwarted." The noun mezimmah (מְזִמָּה) means purpose, plan, or intention. Job acknowledges that God's purposes cannot be frustrated by human ignorance, resistance, or questioning. What God intends, He accomplishes.

Job's confession represents transformation. Earlier he demanded answers, questioned God's justice, and insisted on vindication. After encountering God personally, he submits—not because he understands his suffering's purpose but because he trusts God's character. This models mature faith: trusting divine sovereignty even when specific purposes remain mysterious. The verse anticipates Romans 8:28, affirming that God works all things according to His purpose, and Ephesians 1:11, declaring that God works all things according to the counsel of His will.

Historical Context

Job 42 records Job's final response after God's speeches from the whirlwind (chapters 38-41). God never directly explained Job's suffering—instead, He revealed His own majesty, wisdom, and power through creation's wonders. This pedagogical approach teaches that knowing God Himself matters more than understanding His specific actions.

Ancient Near Eastern literature rarely portrayed humans acknowledging divine sovereignty so completely without resentment. Job's transformation from demanding answers to confessing trust shows authentic faith maturation. The book's resolution vindicates Job—God declares he spoke rightly about God (42:7-8) and restores his fortunes doubly (42:10-17)—but only after Job releases his demand for explanations and trusts God's character.

This pattern recurs throughout Scripture: Abraham trusting God's promise despite impossibility (Romans 4:18-21), Mary submitting to God's plan despite incomprehension (Luke 1:38), Paul learning that God's grace suffices (2 Corinthians 12:9). Christian theology affirms divine sovereignty while acknowledging human inability to comprehend God's purposes fully. Job's confession models the faith response: trusting that God's purposes, though mysterious, are wise, good, and unstoppable.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Job's confession of God's omnipotence and sovereignty differ from his earlier demands for answers and vindication?
2. What does it mean practically to trust that 'no thought can be withholden from God'—that His purposes cannot be thwarted?

3. How can we cultivate Job's mature faith that trusts God's character even without understanding His specific actions?
4. In what ways does this verse challenge modern assumptions that we deserve explanations for our suffering?
5. How does confessing God's absolute sovereignty provide comfort rather than fatalism when facing difficult circumstances?

Interlinear Text

אֲנִי יָדָעְתִּי	כִּי	כָּל	תּוֹכָל	לַעֲשׂוֹת	וְלִפְנֵי רַבְּךָ	מִכֹּחַ
I know	H3588	H3605	that thou canst do	H3808	can be withholden	H4480
H3045			H3201		H1219	

מִכָּל דָּבָר וְלֹא מִחִשְׁבָּה:
every thing and that no thought
H4209

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 19:26 (Parallel theme): But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Mark 10:27 (Parallel theme): And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Genesis 18:14 (Parallel theme): Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

Jeremiah 32:17 (Parallel theme): Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

Isaiah 46:10 (Parallel theme): Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

Ephesians 1:11 (Parallel theme): In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Psalms 44:21 (Parallel theme): Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

Job 23:13 (Parallel theme): But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.

Proverbs 19:21 (Parallel theme): There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

Isaiah 14:27 (Parallel theme): For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

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