

Job 9:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.

Analysis

Job proclaims God's exclusive creative work: 'Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.' The word 'alone' (bad, בַּד) emphasizes God's sole agency—no divine council or assistants, only God creates. 'Spreadeth out' (natah, נָטָה) pictures stretching a tent (Isaiah 40:22, 42:5), while 'treadeth upon' (darak, דָּרַךְ) suggests dominion and control. Walking on sea waves demonstrates mastery over chaos (compare Christ walking on water, Matthew 14:25).

Job's monotheistic confession strengthens his dilemma: if one God alone creates and controls everything, then this same God orchestrates Job's suffering. There's no rival deity to blame, no cosmic conflict excusing divine inaction. The same sovereignty that demands worship creates accountability questions. How can the Creator who treads on sea waves (chaos) allow His righteous servant to drown in suffering?

The imagery anticipates Christ's identity as Creator (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16) and His demonstration of deity by walking on water. Job's theology is sound—God alone creates—but lacks the Christological revelation that the Creator became creature to suffer with and for us.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern creation myths featured multiple deities creating through conflict. Job's 'alone' polemically rejects polytheism, affirming strict monotheism. The sea represented chaos in ancient cosmology; God's treading on it demonstrates absolute sovereignty over what ancients feared most.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does strict monotheism both intensify the problem of suffering (one God controls all) and provide hope (that same God redeems)?
2. What does Christ's walking on water reveal about His identity as Creator and His power over chaos threatening our lives?
3. In what ways does recognizing God 'alone' as Creator prevent us from blaming circumstances, other people, or spiritual forces for our trials?

Interlinear Text

נֶטָּה	שָׁמַיִם	לִבְדּוֹ	דּוֹרְךָ	עַל
Which alone spreadeth out	the heavens	H905	and treadeth	H5921
H5186	H8064		H1869	
בְּמַתֵּי	יָם:			
upon the waves	of the sea			
H1116	H3220			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 44:24 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;

Isaiah 40:22 (Parallel theme): It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in:

Job 37:18 (Parallel theme): Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking glass?

Zechariah 12:1 (Parallel theme): The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.

Psalms 33:6 (Parallel theme): By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

Jeremiah 10:11 (Parallel theme): Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.