

Psalm 95:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

Analysis

In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. This verse proclaims God's sovereign ownership over creation's extremes—from the deepest chasms to the highest peaks. "In his hand" (beyado, בְּיָדוֹ) signifies possession, control, and power. The "hand" of God is a biblical metaphor for His active power and governance (Exodus 15:6; Psalm 89:13; Isaiah 50:2).

"The deep places of the earth" translates mechqerei-erets (מְחֻקְרֵי-אָרֶץ), literally "the searched-out places" or depths—possibly referring to ocean depths, subterranean caverns, or mines where humans extract precious resources. Ancient peoples stood in awe of depths beyond their reach; yet these unreachable places lie fully in God's grasp. "The strength of the hills" (to'aphot harim, תּוֹעֲפֹת הָרִים) uses to'aphah, meaning summits, heights, or strength—the mighty, majestic peaks that symbolize permanence and power.

The verse establishes a theological principle: if God holds creation's extremes (depths and heights), He certainly governs everything in between—including human affairs. This grounds the psalm's call to worship (v. 6) and warning against hardening hearts (vv. 8-11). We worship the Creator who holds all things in His hand, making rebellion against Him futile and trust in Him reasonable.

Historical Context

Psalm 95 is a liturgical call to worship, likely used as Israel approached God in temple worship. Ancient Near Eastern cosmology understood the world as having three tiers: heavens above, earth in the middle, and the underworld/depths below. By declaring God's sovereignty over earth's depths and heights, the psalm asserts His complete dominion over creation. Hebrews 3:7-11 and 4:7 quote Psalm 95:7-11, applying its warning to New Testament believers: do not harden your hearts against God's voice.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that God holds creation's extremes 'in his hand' affect your trust in His governance of your circumstances?
2. What modern 'depths' and 'heights' (scientific discoveries, technological achievements) tempt people to forget God's sovereignty?
3. How should God's control over creation's extremes shape your worship and obedience?

Interlinear Text

בְּ יָדָיו אֲשֶׁר
H834 In his hand are the deep places
בְּ יָדָיו H3027 מַחֲקָרִים H4278 אֲשֶׁר
הַקּוֹרְבָּן H776 אֲכִילָה H8443 וְתֹעַפְתָּה
הַרְבָּןִים H2022

:17

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Additional Cross-References

Psalms 135:6 (Parallel theme): Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

Habakkuk 3:10 (Parallel theme): The mountains saw thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high.

Psalms 97:5 (Parallel theme): The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

Psalms 65:6 (Parallel theme): Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power:

Job 11:10 (Parallel theme): If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?

Job 9:5 (Parallel theme): Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.

Nahum 1:5 (Parallel theme): The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

Habakkuk 3:6 (Parallel theme): He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.

Micah 1:4 (Parallel theme): And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place.