

# Deuteronomy 28:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

## Analysis

**The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed**—This verse continues the drought curse with devastating specificity. Instead of life-giving rain (matar, מַתָּר), God sends avak va'afar (אַבָּק וְעַפָּר, powder and dust)—the same terms describing dry, pulverized earth or dust storms. The phrase yitten Yahweh et-metar artska avak va'afar (יִתְן יְהוָה אֶת-מַטָּר אַרְצָךְ אַבָּק וְעַפָּר), the LORD will make/give the rain of your land powder and dust) suggests that what falls from the sky isn't water but particulate matter—possibly referencing severe dust storms, sandstorms, or ashfall from volcanic activity.

The conclusion min-hashamayim yered alekha ad hishamdekha (מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם יַרְדֶּנָה אֲלֵךְהָאֶדְהָדָה, from heaven it shall come down upon you until you are destroyed) mirrors rain's descent but with opposite effect—destruction instead of flourishing. This inverts the blessing of Deuteronomy 28:12 where 'the LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season.' Heaven's 'treasure' becomes judgment rather than blessing. Some commentators see echoes of the Egyptian plague of dust/ashes becoming boils (Exodus 9:8-10), showing covenant curses parallel Egypt's judgments—Israel under curse experiences Egypt-like plagues despite their exodus deliverance.

## Historical Context

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The ancient Near East experienced severe dust storms, particularly from the Arabian Desert and during drought periods when topsoil dried and became airborne. These storms could devastate crops, suffocate livestock, and make life unbearable. The curse may also reference ashfall from volcanic eruptions (though rare in Canaan) or the choking dust of military destruction. Prophets described such conditions during judgment: Jeremiah speaks of 'wind from the bare heights in the wilderness' (Jeremiah 4:11), and Joel describes locust plagues accompanied by environmental devastation (Joel 1:17-20). The contrast between expected rain and received dust perfectly captures covenant curse—nature provides the opposite of what's needed for survival.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does receiving dust instead of rain demonstrate the complete reversal of divine blessing under covenant curse?
2. What does it mean that heaven's 'treasure' can be either life-giving rain or destroying dust, depending on covenant relationship?

## Interlinear Text

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וְיַעֲשֶׂת יְהֹוָה אֶת מַטֵּר אֶרְאָבֶן אֶבֶן קָלָב מִן יְעָפָר אֶבֶן קָלָב מִן  
shall make The LORD H853 the rain of thy land powder and dust H4480

מִן שָׁמְמָן יְהֹוָה יְהֹוָה עַל יְהֹוָה עַל יְהֹוָה  
from heaven shall it come down H3381 H5921 H5704 upon thee until thou be destroyed H8045

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 28:12** (References Lord): The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.

**Isaiah 5:24** (References Lord): Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

**Amos 4:11** (References Lord): I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.

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