

Habakkuk 3:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

The mountains saw thee, and they trembled (הָרִים יַחִילוּ/ra'ukha yachilu harim)—creation itself reacts to God's presence with fear. Mountains, symbols of permanence and stability, shake at theophany. This echoes Sinai, where the mountain quaked at God's descent (Exodus 19:18).

The overflowing of the water passed by (זֶרֶם מַיִם עָבַר/zerem mayim avar)—torrents of water swept past, likely referencing the Red Sea parting or Jordan's division. **The deep uttered his voice** (תְּהוֹם נָתַן קוֹלוֹ/tehom natan qolo)—even the ocean depths cried out. **And lifted up his hands on high** (רֹם יָדָיו נָשָׂא/rom yadayv nasa)—hands raised high, possibly depicting waves lifted up or a gesture of surrender/worship. The personification of natural forces emphasizes creation's response to Creator: nature itself worships and obeys.

Historical Context

This poetic recollection draws from exodus and conquest narratives where God displayed mastery over creation. At the Red Sea, waters stood up as walls (Exodus 14:22). At Sinai, thunder, lightning, and earthquakes accompanied God's presence (Exodus 19:16-18). At Jordan, waters stopped flowing and piled up (Joshua 3:15-16). These miraculous interventions demonstrated Yahweh's superiority over pagan gods supposedly controlling natural forces. Egyptian gods included the Nile and sea deities; Canaanite Baal claimed control over storms and fertility. By

commanding nature, Yahweh proved His exclusive deity and power to save His people.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does creation's response to God's presence (trembling, crying out, obeying) inform proper human response to God's holiness?
2. What does God's sovereignty over natural forces teach about His ability to control circumstances in your life?
3. How should remembering God's past demonstrations of power affect confidence in His current and future work?

Interlinear Text

רָא וַיִּבֹקֶעוּ	וַיִּתְּרָם יְהוָה	הַהָרִים	וַיִּתְּרָם	מֵי הַיָּם		
saw	thee and they trembled	The mountains	the overflowing	of the water		
H7200	H2342	H2022	H2230	H4325		
עָבָר	נָתַן	תְּהוֹמוֹת	קוֹל וְ	רֹם	יְדֵי יְהוָה	נִשְׂאָה:
passed by	uttered	the deep	his voice	on high	his hands	and lifted up
H5674	H5414	H8415	H6963	H7315	H3027	H5375

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 11:29 (Parallel theme): By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

Psalms 93:3 (Parallel theme): The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

Isaiah 43:20 (Parallel theme): The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

Jeremiah 4:24 (Parallel theme): I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly.

Matthew 27:51 (Parallel theme): And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

Joshua 4:18 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before.