

Isaiah 50:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.

Analysis

The question 'Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer?' expresses God's surprise at finding no responsive faith. The assurance 'Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?' defends divine omnipotence against doubts. The catalog of past deliverances (drying sea, making rivers wilderness) proves God's ability - the problem isn't His power but their unbelief.

Historical Context

This addresses post-exilic questioning of God's willingness or ability to restore Israel to former glory. The Exodus imagery reminds them that the same God who split the Red Sea can certainly defeat Babylon.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. When God comes to you, do you respond with faith or find excuses for unbelief?
2. How does rehearsing God's past mighty acts strengthen faith that His 'hand is not shortened' for present needs?

Interlinear Text

מַדּוּעַ H4069	בְּ אֵתִי H935	וְאֵין H369	אִישׁ H376	קָרָאתִי H7121	וְאֵין H369
Wherefore	when I came	was there	no man	when I called	
עוֹנָה	וְאֵין H6030	קָצַרְהָ H7114	קָצַרְהָ H7114	יָדִי H3027	מִפְדּוֹתַי H6304
was there	none to answer	at all	at all	Is my hand	that it cannot redeem
וְאֵין H518	אֵין H369	בִּי H0	לְהַצִּיל H5337	הִנֵּה H2005	בְּנִשְׁכָּתִי H1606
or have I	no power	to deliver	behold	at my rebuke	
אֶחָד יֵבֶשׁ H2717	יָם H3220	אֶשׂ יֵבֶשׁ H7760	נְהָרוֹת H5104	מִדְבָּר H4057	תִּבְאֶשׁ H887
I dry up	the sea	I make	the rivers	a wilderness	stinketh
וְאֵין H369	מִי H4325	וְתִמָּת H4191	בְּצָמָא H6772		
because there is	no water	and dieth	for thirst		

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 59:1 (Parallel theme): Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

Numbers 11:23 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, Is the LORD'S hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not.

Isaiah 66:4 (Parallel theme): I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

Joshua 3:16 (Parallel theme): That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

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.

Proverbs 1:24 (Parallel theme): Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

Hosea 11:7 (Parallel theme): And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him.

Isaiah 42:15 (Parallel theme): I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

Isaiah 65:12 (Parallel theme): Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.

Isaiah 43:16 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters;