

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

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

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

מִדְבָּר	בְּאֶתְנָה	אֵין	אִישׁ	בְּקָרָאתִי	אֵין
H4069	Wherefore when I came	H369	was there no man	when I called	H369
	H935		H376		H7121
עָוֹנָה	בְּאֵין הַקָּצֶב הַקָּצֶב הַקָּצֶב הַקָּצֶב הַקָּצֶב הַקָּצֶב	מִפְּדָה תִּתְּ	מִפְּדָה תִּתְּ	מִפְּדָה תִּתְּ	מִפְּדָה תִּתְּ
was there none to answer	at all at all at all at all at all at all	Is my hand	that it cannot redeem		
H6030	H7114 H7114 H7114 H7114 H7114 H7114	H3027	H6304		
וְאַם	בְּיַד	כַּעֲלָד	לְפָאֵל	בְּגַעֲרָתִי	
H518	H369 H0	or have I no power	to deliver	H2005	behold at my rebuke
	H3581		H5337		H1606
דְּגַתְּמָה	תַּבְאֵשׁ	מִדְבָּר	גְּנַבְּרוֹת	אֲשֶׁר יְמִינֵךְ	אֲפָר יָבֵב
I dry up	the sea	I make	the rivers	a wilderness	stinketh their fish
H2717	H3220	H7760	H5104	H4057	H887 H1710
מֵאַי	מִם	מִמְּ	וְתַמְּמֵת	בְּצַמְמָאָה	
H369	because there is no water	H4325	and dieth	H4191	for thirst
				H6772	

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;