

Job 1:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

Analysis

The 'fire of God' (Hebrew 'esh Elohim') likely refers to lightning, demonstrating that natural disasters join human evil in testing Job. This raises profound theological questions about God's relationship to natural evil. Reformed theology maintains that God sovereignly uses natural phenomena without being morally culpable for the suffering they cause. The destruction of the sheep removed Job's primary source of wealth and clothing.

Historical Context

Lightning strikes that cause fires were interpreted in the ancient world as divine judgment. The messenger's attribution to 'God' reveals how even observers recognized the supernatural nature of Job's comprehensive calamity.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do you understand God's relationship to natural disasters that cause human suffering?
2. When have you experienced what seemed like divine judgment, only to later see God's refining purpose?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אָשָׁר
H5750 H2088 While he was yet speaking H1696
מִתְבָּבָר מִן תְּפִלָּה מִן פְּשָׁעִים וְתַּבְּעַר
H2088 there came also another and said H935 H559
בְּאָשָׁר תְּבָבָר וְתַּבְּעַר מִן פְּשָׁעִים
The fire of God is fallen from heaven and hath burned up the sheep
H784 H430 H4480 H8064 H1197 H6629
לְבָדֵי אֶתְנָא בְּלִבְנָא יְמִינָה וְבְנָעָר יְמִינָה
and the servants and consumed them and I only am escaped H5288 H398 H4422 H7535 H589 H905
לְבָדֵי אֶתְנָא בְּלִבְנָא
alone to tell H5046 H0

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 19:24 (Parallel theme): Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

2 Kings 1:12 (References God): And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

Revelation 13:13 (Parallel theme): And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

Amos 7:4 (References God): Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and, behold, the Lord GOD called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part.

1 Kings 18:38 (Parallel theme): Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

Leviticus 10:2 (Parallel theme): And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

2 Kings 1:10 (References God): And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

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