

Job 26:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding
he smiteth through the proud.

Analysis

He divideth the sea with his power (בְּכֹחַ רָגַע הַיָּם)—the verb raga (רָגַע) means to stir up, disturb, or still, implying sovereign control over chaos waters. This echoes creation (Genesis 1:2) and Exodus (14:21), establishing God's authority over cosmic and historical chaos. Koach (כֹּחַ, power/strength) emphasizes raw divine might.

By his understanding he smiteth through the proud (וּבְתְבוּנָתוֹ מַחֵץ רָהַב). Tebunah (תְּבוּנָה) denotes discernment and wisdom—God defeats chaos not merely by force but by intelligent design. Rahab (רָהַב, the proud) refers to the mythological chaos monster representing primordial rebellion, mentioned in Job 9:13, Psalm 89:10, and Isaiah 51:9. God's machats (מַחֵץ, shattering/piercing) of Rahab demonstrates that divine wisdom always triumphs over prideful opposition. This prefigures Christ's defeat of Satan through the 'foolishness' of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:25).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern creation myths featured violent divine conflicts with chaos monsters (Tiamat in Enuma Elish, Leviathan in Ugaritic texts). Job appropriates this imagery to exalt YHWH's unchallenged sovereignty—He doesn't struggle against Rahab but effortlessly strikes through it. This theological polemic affirms monotheism against pagan dualism.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's combination of power and understanding in creation inform how we should approach problems—with both strength and wisdom?
2. In what ways does Christ's defeat of spiritual 'Rahab' (Satan and death) through the cross demonstrate divine wisdom surpassing mere power?
3. What 'proud' forces in your life need to be struck through by God's discerning power?

Interlinear Text

בְּ כֹחוֹ	רָגַע	הַיָּם	וּ בְתוֹבָנָתוֹ	הָ מֵחַץ
with his power	He divideth	the sea	and by his understanding	he smiteth
H3581	H7280	H3220	H8394	H4272
וְהָרַגָּהּ:				
through the proud				
H7293				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 51:15 (Parallel theme): But I am the LORD thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts is his name.

Jeremiah 31:35 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

Isaiah 51:9 (Parallel theme): Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

Job 12:13 (Parallel theme): With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

Job 9:13 (Parallel theme): If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.

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