

Job 26:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?

Analysis

Job concludes: 'Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?' The phrase 'parts of his ways' (qetsot derakhav, קְצֹת דְּرָכָיו) uses qetsot meaning 'edges' or 'extremities'—we perceive only the fringes of God's works. The word shemets (שְׁמֵץ, portion) means a whisper or faint sound. Ra'am (רָעָם, thunder) suggests overwhelming power. Job humbly acknowledges that even his profound descriptions of divine power barely scratch the surface—God's full majesty transcends human comprehension.

Historical Context

Job's humility about human understanding contrasts sharply with his friends' certainty. After describing God's cosmic power (26:5-13), Job admits these descriptions capture only the smallest portion of divine reality. This epistemological humility allows Job both to affirm what he knows (God's power and character) and admit what he doesn't (God's specific purposes in his suffering). The balance models mature faith.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Job's acknowledgment that we perceive only the 'edges' of God's ways shape appropriate humility in our theology?
2. What is the difference between Job's humble wonder and his friends' presumptuous certainty?

Interlinear Text

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|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|------------|----------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------|
| זֶה בָּרָךְ | שֶׁ מֵזָה | אֲלֹהָן | אֵת | זֶה וְתֵךְ | וְמִמְּה | לְנַכְּתָה | זֶה וְתֵךְ | זֶה וְתֵךְ | זֶה וְתֵךְ |
| H2005 | H428 | Lo these are parts | of his ways | H7098 | H1870 | H4100 | but how little | a portion | H1697 |
| בָּשָׁמָעַ | בְּרֹתָה | עִם | בְּרֹתָה | בְּרֹתָה | מִי | בְּרֹתָה | מִי | בְּרֹתָה | מִי |
| is heard | ^{H0} | of him but the thunder | of his power | H7482 | H1369 | H4310 | who can understand | | H995 |

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 139:6 (Parallel theme): Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

Psalms 145:3 (Parallel theme): Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.

Romans 11:33 (Parallel theme): O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Psalms 29:3 (Parallel theme): The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD is upon many waters.

Job 40:9 (Parallel theme): Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

Job 4:12 (Parallel theme): Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

Job 36:29 (Parallel theme): Also can any understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his tabernacle?

1 Samuel 2:10 (Parallel theme): The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

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