

Job 28:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder:

Analysis

When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder—Divine legislation extends to meteorological phenomena. Ba'asoto lamatār choq (בָּשָׁתָן לְמַטָּר חֹק), when He made for the rain a decree/statute) uses choq (חֹק), the term for binding law or statute—the same word describing God's moral law. Rain doesn't fall capriciously but according to divinely enacted statutes governing precipitation patterns, seasonal cycles, and geographical distribution.

Derekh la-chavat qolot (דֶּרֶךְ לְחַבָּת קָלוֹת), a path for the thunderbolt of voices/thunders) personifies lightning as following an appointed derekh (דֶּרֶךְ, way/path). Ancient peoples viewed lightning as terrifyingly random, but Job declares it travels prescribed routes. The phrase 'voices of thunder' (literally 'thunderings of sounds') captures the multiple crashes and rumbles accompanying electrical storms. Psalm 29 celebrates these 'voices' as declaring God's glory. The imagery points toward Job 38:25, where God asks, 'Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder?'—expecting Job to acknowledge he cannot govern what God decrees.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern religions attributed thunder and lightning to capricious storm gods (Baal in Canaan, Adad in Mesopotamia) who wielded these forces in divine warfare. In contrast, Job presents one sovereign God who enacts unchanging laws governing all weather phenomena. The vocabulary of legal

decree (choq) applied to natural processes was revolutionary—nature isn't animated by competing deities but operates under consistent divine jurisprudence. This theological insight laid groundwork for later scientific investigation, as belief in lawful creation encouraged discovering natural laws.

Related Passages

James 2:17 – Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does viewing natural phenomena as following God's 'decrees' change your response to weather events beyond human control?
2. What does it mean that the same God who decrees moral law also legislates the path of lightning?
3. In what ways does God's governance over rain and lightning demonstrate wisdom that surpasses human attempts to control or predict nature?

Interlinear Text

קָלֹת:	לְפָזִיז	לְמַטָּר	חַק	רְגֵג	יְדָרֶג	בָּעֵשֶׂת	וְ
When he made	for the rain	a decree	and a way	for the lightning	of the thunder		

Additional Cross-References

Job 38:25 (Light): Who hath divided a watercourse for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;

Job 37:3 (Light): He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth.

Zechariah 10:1 (Parallel theme): Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

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