

Job 30:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me.

Analysis

They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters (כִּפְרָץ רָחֵב יְאַתָּה)—Perets (פֶּרֶץ) means a breach or break, particularly in city walls or dams; rachav (רָחֵב) means wide or broad. Job likens his attackers to flood waters bursting through a broken dam—unstoppable, overwhelming, destructive. The verb athah (אָתָה) means to come, arrive, or advance. This isn't a trickle but a catastrophic deluge.

In the desolation they rolled themselves upon me (תְּמִתָּה שָׁאָה הַתְּמִלָּלָה)—Shoah (שֹׁאָה) means devastation, ruin, or storm; galal (גָּלָל) means to roll, roll down, or tumble. Waters don't flow smoothly but tumble in destructive waves, one after another. The imagery echoes Psalm 42:7: 'all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.' Job drowns in successive waves of calamity, unable to surface before the next crashes down.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern cities depended on defensive walls and controlled water systems. A wall breach during siege meant certain destruction—defenders couldn't stop the flood of invading forces. Flash flooding was also a deadly reality in arid climates where sudden storms sent walls of water through wadis. Job employs both images: his defenses have been breached, and destructive forces pour through unstoppably. The Psalms frequently use flood imagery for overwhelming trouble (Psalm 69:1-2, 15), making this a traditional lament motif.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How do successive trials—wave after wave—test faith differently than single catastrophes?
2. When have you felt overwhelmed by troubles coming too fast to process?
Where did you find solid ground?
3. How does Job's vivid imagery give us permission to express our suffering honestly rather than minimizing it?

Interlinear Text

בָּרְאָה	בְּעֵבֶר	וְאֵת	בְּתַהְרָה	שְׁאֵה	הַתְּפִלְגָּה
breaking	upon me as a wide	They came	in of waters in	the desolation	they rolled
H6556	H7342	H857	H8478	H7722	H1556

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