

Job 36:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly.

Analysis

Which the clouds do drop and distil upon man abundantly (אֲשֶׁר־יִזְזֵלוּ שְׁחָקִים, asher-yizzelu shechakim yir'apu alei adam rav)—The verb nazal (נָזַל, "to flow, drip, distill") and ra'aph (רָעַף, "to drop, drip abundantly") both describe precipitation. The noun shachaq (שַׁחַק, clouds, skies) and phrase "upon man abundantly" (alei adam rav) emphasize God's provision through rain for humanity. This is providence theology: God sustains creation through natural processes. Psalm 65:9-11 celebrates: "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it... thou preparest them corn."

Rain as divine gift appears throughout Scripture: blessing for obedience (Deuteronomy 28:12), withheld for disobedience (Deuteronomy 11:17). Jesus points to God's indiscriminate provision: "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45). This common grace demonstrates God's goodness to all (Acts 14:17, "gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons"). The gospel reveals greater provision: the Spirit poured out like rain (Isaiah 44:3, Joel 2:28-29, Acts 2:17-18), bringing spiritual fruitfulness.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern agricultural societies depended entirely on rainfall—no irrigation systems in most regions. Rain's arrival or failure determined survival or famine. Canaanite religion worshiped Baal as rain-giver, requiring ritual prostitution to ensure fertility. Israel's exclusive worship of Yahweh as rain-giver

was countercultural. Elijah's contest on Carmel (1 Kings 18) demonstrated Yahweh's exclusive control over rain. Elihu's theology continues this: rain evidences divine providence, not impersonal natural forces or pagan deities.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's provision through natural processes (rain, seasons) demonstrate His faithfulness?
2. What does rain on just and unjust (Matthew 5:45) teach about common grace?
3. How does the Spirit's outpouring (Joel 2:28, Acts 2:17) relate to God's provision of physical rain?

Interlinear Text

אֲשֶׁר	יִזְל ו	שְׁחָק ים	וּרְעַפ ו	עַל ין	אֶד מ	רַב:
H834	do drop	Which the clouds	and distil	H5921	upon man	abundantly
	H5140	H7834	H7491		H120	H7227

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 3:20 (Parallel theme): By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.