

Job 36:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it not to shine by the cloud that cometh betwixt.

Analysis

With clouds he covereth the light (על-כְּפִים כְּפָה-אֹר, al-kappayim kissah-or)—The phrase "upon palms" (al-kappayim) may mean God holds lightning in His hands (literal or poetic). The verb kasah (הַקָּשַׁה, "to cover") and or (אֹר, light, possibly lightning) creates vivid imagery of divine control. The phrase **and commandeth it not to shine by the cloud that cometh betwixt** (וְיִצְאֵן עַל-הָבָד בְּמַפְגִּיעַ, vaytzav aleha bemapgia) uses tzavah (צָהָב, "to command") and paga (פָּגָע, "to meet, encounter, intercede"). God commands lightning where to strike, clouds when to obscure light. This emphasizes meticulous divine sovereignty over natural forces.

God's command over creation appears from Genesis 1 ("Let there be...") through Revelation. Psalm 148:8 declares: "Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word." Jesus commanded weather (Mark 4:39, "Peace, be still") and it obeyed, demonstrating divine authority. The gospel reveals Christ is Creator-Logos (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16) who sustains all things by His powerful word (Hebrews 1:3). Natural forces that seem chaotic or random actually fulfill divine purpose. This provides assurance: no storm, disaster, or circumstance escapes God's sovereign command.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern religions portrayed nature as semi-autonomous or controlled by competing deities. Biblical theology consistently affirms Yahweh's absolute control over all natural phenomena (Psalm 29, entire psalm on God's voice in

thunderstorm). Israelite monotheism was radical: one God created and controls everything. No competing powers, no autonomous nature. Elihu's theology continues this: lightning doesn't strike randomly but according to divine command. This prepared for NT Christology: the incarnate Word who commands creation.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does God's meticulous control over natural phenomena provide comfort during life's chaos?
2. What does Christ's authority over nature reveal about His identity and relationship to creation?
3. How should belief in divine sovereignty over natural forces affect environmental theology?

Interlinear Text

עַל יְמֵי כְּפֹה כְּפֹה אֵרֶא וְיַצְאֵת עַל יְמֵי כְּפֹה כְּפֹה אֵרֶא וְיַצְאֵת
H5921 **With clouds** H3680 **he covereth** H216 **the light** and commandeth H6680 H5921

בְּמִפְּנֵי: it not to shine by the cloud that cometh betwixt
H6293

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