

Job 36:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The noise thereof sheweth concerning it, the cattle also concerning the vapour.

Analysis

The noise thereof sheweth concerning it (בְּגִיד עַלְיוֹ רְעֵא, yaggid alav re'o)—The verse is textually difficult. The noun rea (רְעֵא) can mean "friend, companion, thunder." Some translations: "its crashing declares His presence" (ESV). The phrase **the cattle also concerning the vapour** (מִקְנֵה אֲפָן עַל-עַזְלָה, miqneh aph al-oleh) is obscure. Possibly: even cattle sense approaching storms. Ancient observation noted animals' sensitivity to weather changes. Elihu's point: all creation responds to God's meteorological works—thunder proclaims His presence, animals sense atmospheric shifts.

Creation testifies to Creator (Psalm 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God"). Romans 1:20 argues God's invisible attributes are "clearly seen... by the things that are made." Thunder's voice symbolizes divine speech (Psalm 29:3-9, Revelation 4:5, 8:5). Jesus compared His return to lightning (Matthew 24:27). The gospel reveals God spoke ultimately through His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2), not merely thunder and natural phenomena. Yet creation's testimony continues, pointing toward Creator, sustaining general revelation until Christ's return brings perfect knowledge (1 Corinthians 13:12).

Historical Context

Ancient peoples interpreted natural phenomena as divine communication. Thunder was considered gods' voices across cultures. Israel's theology agreed—thunder is God's voice (Exodus 19:16, Job 37:2-5, Psalm 29)—but demythologized it: not

capricious divine anger but covenant Lord's majestic presence. Animal behavior forecasting weather was common ancient observation (still valid: animals detect barometric pressure changes, earthquakes). Elihu's nature theology grounds in observation, interpreted theologically: creation reveals Creator's attributes and activity.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does creation's testimony through natural phenomena point toward God's attributes?
2. What is the relationship between general revelation (nature) and special revelation (Scripture, Christ)?
3. How should we interpret dramatic natural phenomena (storms, earthquakes) theologically without superstition?

Interlinear Text

וְיֵדְךָ	עַל	רָעָיו	מִלְבָדָהּ	אַל	עַל
thereof sheweth	H5921	The noise	concerning it the cattle	H637	H5921
H5046		H7452	H4735		
עַלְהָ					
also concerning the vapour					
H5927					

Additional Cross-References

Job 37:2 (Parallel theme): Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth.

