

Job 37:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

By the breath of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

Analysis

By the breath of God frost is given (mi-nishmat-'El yitten-qarah, מִנִּשְׁמַת־אֵל יִתְּנַחַר)—The noun nishmat (נִשְׁמָת) from neshamah (נֶשֶׁמָה) means 'breath' or 'spirit,' the same word used when God breathed life into Adam (Genesis 2:7). God's breath both animates life and freezes water—creative and destructive power from the same source. **The breadth of the waters is straitened** (ve-rohab mayim be-mûtsaq, וְרָחַב מֵים בְּמֻצָּק)—mûtsaq means constricted or compressed; ice 'narrows' flowing water.

The paradox is stunning: God's life-giving breath can also freeze and kill. The same divine ruach that hovered over primordial waters (Genesis 1:2) now solidifies them. This dual nature of God's breath anticipates the Spirit's work in New Testament—bringing both life (John 20:22) and judgment (2 Thessalonians 2:8).

Historical Context

Ancient peoples marveled at water's transformation into solid ice, seeing it as miraculous rather than routine physics. Elihu interprets freezing as God's exhaled breath, connecting meteorology to the creation narrative where divine breath is the source of all animation and order.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How can the same God whose breath gives life also send seasons that 'freeze' and constrict your circumstances?
2. What does the duality of God's breath—both creative and limiting—teach you about His character?
3. When have you experienced God's Spirit simultaneously bringing life to some areas while 'freezing' movement in others?

Interlinear Text

מִשְׁמָתָה לְאָלָה יְתָה קְרָחָה וְרַבָּה מִמְּוּאָד
By the breath of God is given frost and the breadth of the waters

H5397

H410

H5414

H7140

H7341

H4325

בְּמֹצֵל:

is straitened

H4164

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org