

Job 37:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it is turned round about by his counsels: that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

Analysis

It is turned round about by his counsels (ve-hu mesibbot mithappek be-tahbulotav, וְהוּא מְסִבּוֹת מִתְּהַפֵּךְ בְּתַחְבּוּלוֹתָיו)—The verb hafak (הִפָּךְ) means to turn or overturn; clouds rotate according to God's tahbulot (תַּחְבּוּלוֹת), meaning 'guidance' or 'wise direction.' **That they may do whatsoever he commandeth them** (lefa'loam kol 'asher yetsavvem, לְפָנֵינוּ כָּל אֲשֶׁר יִצְוֶם)—weather systems have a mission (po'al, פֹּעַל, 'work' or 'purpose').

Elihu presents meteorology as teleological—clouds don't drift randomly but execute divine assignments 'upon the face of the world' ('al-pene tevel, עַל-פְּנֵי תֵבֵל). The same verb tsavah (צִוָּה, 'command') used for God's moral law applies to atmospheric obedience. This anticipates Romans 8:19-22: creation itself groans awaiting redemption, subject to God's sovereign purposes.

Historical Context

Against ancient Near Eastern chaos-mythology where storms represented divine conflict, Elihu insists weather follows divine 'counsels'—deliberate wisdom-plans, not arbitrary caprice. This reflects Israel's unique understanding of creation as ordered cosmos under single sovereign will.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. If weather systems 'do whatsoever God commands,' how does this shape your theology of natural disasters?
2. What does it mean that clouds follow God's 'counsels'—His wise plans—rather than mechanistic natural laws?
3. How do you balance God's sovereignty over nature's violence with His character as loving Father?

Interlinear Text

כָּל	לַפְעֻלָּם	בְּתַחְבֻּלָּתוֹ	מִתְהַפֵּךְ	מִסָּב וְתוֹ	וְהוּא
H3605	H6467	H8458	H2015	H4524	H1931
	that they may do	by his counsels	And it is turned	round about	
תִּבְּל	פְּנֵי	עַל	יְצוּם	אֲשֶׁר	
H8398	H6440	H5921	H6680	H834	
of the world	them upon the face		whatsoever he commandeth	in the earth	
				H776	
					אֶרֶץ:

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 148:8 (Parallel theme): Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word: