Job 37:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

> Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused the light of his cloud to shine?

Analysis

Dost thou know when God disposed them (hata-yada'ta be-sum 'eloah 'alayhem, הֲתֵדַע בְּשׂוּם אֱלוֹהַ עֲלֵיהֶם)—Elihu's rhetorical question uses yada' (יָדַע, 'know') with the preposition be-sum (בְּשׂוּם, 'in the placing'), challenging Job's understanding of divine ordering. **And caused the light of his cloud to shine** (ve-hofi'a or 'anano, וְהוֹפִיעַ אוֹר עֲנָנוֹ)—the verb yafa' (יָפַע) means to shine forth or cause to appear; or (אוֹר) is light/lightning.

This prepares for God's own interrogation of Job starting in chapter 38: 'Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations?' Elihu asks if Job comprehends the timing of God's meteorological decisions—when clouds form, when lightning strikes. The question exposes human ignorance of divine logistics, yet God later makes Job's ignorance itself the curriculum for encountering divine majesty.

Historical Context

Lightning was deeply mysterious to ancient peoples, appearing instantaneous and unpredictable. Elihu uses human inability to predict or explain lightning as evidence of the Creator-creature distinction: God alone knows the 'when' and 'how' of natural phenomena because He actively causes them.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. When have you demanded to know God's timing ('when He disposed them') only to realize the question itself revealed your pride?
2. How does acknowledging your ignorance of natural processes cultivate appropriate humility before God?
3. What is the relationship between God 'causing light to shine' from clouds and Christ as the Light shining in darkness (John 1:5)?

Interlinear Text

הֲ תֵדַע	בְּשׂוּם	אֱל וֹהַּ	עֲלֵיהֶ ם	וְ הוֹפִ יעַ
Dost thou know	**disposed**	**when God**	H5921	**to shine**
H3045	H7760	H433		H3313

א וֹר	עֲנָנָוֹ:
them and caused the light	**of his cloud**
H216	H6051