

Job 37:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And now men see not the bright light which is in the clouds:
but the wind passeth, and cleanseth them.

Analysis

And now men see not the bright light (אוֹר בָּהִיר, or bahir)—Elihu describes the sun obscured by clouds, invisible despite its brightness. Yet **the wind passeth, and cleanseth them** (רוּחַ עֲרָה וַתְּפַקֵּד רָם, ruach avrah vatehaherem). The verb פָּקַד (taher, 'cleanse') is used for ritual purification—wind purifies the sky by dispersing clouds, revealing the sun that was always there.

The metaphor brilliantly addresses Job's complaint: God seems absent, hidden by suffering's clouds. But like the sun behind clouds, God's glory remains constant—only our perception is obscured. The passing wind represents God's sovereign timing in removing obstacles to clear vision. Jesus uses similar imagery: 'The wind bloweth where it listeth' (John 3:8), describing the Spirit's sovereign work. This verse anticipates Job's restoration when the 'clouds' of suffering disperse, revealing that God's favor never actually departed. Faith trusts the unseen sun during cloudy days.

Historical Context

Palestinian weather features sudden wind changes that rapidly clear cloudy skies, especially after winter rains. Elihu uses this observable phenomenon to teach theological truth. Ancient peoples, more attuned to weather patterns than modern indoor populations, would immediately grasp the metaphor. The imagery parallels Malachi 3:2-3, where God refines like fire to reveal pure gold.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What 'clouds' currently obscure your view of God's goodness, and how might you trust the unseen reality behind them?
2. How does this verse comfort believers experiencing the 'dark night of the soul' when God seems absent?
3. In what ways does suffering function like clouds—temporary obscuration rather than permanent absence?

Interlinear Text

ה	א	בָּהּ	ירֵא	א	וֹרֶא	רֵא	א	לֹא	וְעַתָּה	הָנָ
H6258	H3808	And now men see	light	not the bright						H1931
	H7200		H216	H925						
וְעַתָּה	יְמִ	בְּשָׁמָן	הַ	וְעַ	בְּרֵ	בְּ	וְעַתָּה	וְעַתָּה	וְעַתָּה	
which is in the clouds	but the wind	passeth	and cleanseth							
H7834	H7307	H5674	H2891							

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