

Job 38:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

Analysis

The text records: 'Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said.' After 35 chapters of human speeches, Yahweh (יְהֹוָה, LORD) speaks directly. The phrase min ha-searah (מִן־הַסְּעָרָה, out of the whirlwind) suggests theophany—divine manifestation through natural phenomena (cf. Exodus 19:16-19, 1 Kings 19:11-12, Ezekiel 1:4). The whirlwind signifies divine power, majesty, and otherness. God's direct answer vindicates Job's longing (23:3-5, 31:35) yet comes not with explanation but with questions that reframe the entire discussion. The shift from human debate to divine revelation marks the book's climax.

Historical Context

Theophanies in the ancient Near East often involved storm imagery—Baal was storm god in Canaanite religion. Yahweh's appearance in whirlwind asserts His supremacy over all creation and supposed deities. The whirlwind theophany continues Israel's experience of God's self-revelation through powerful natural phenomena. God's direct speech resolves the narrative tension—all human wisdom must yield to divine revelation.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What does God's speaking out of the whirlwind teach about His power and transcendence?
2. How does the shift from human debate to divine revelation reframe our approach to life's mysteries?

Interlinear Text

תִּשְׁרֵךְ	וְיָמָתְךָ	אַתָּה	אַיִל	אַנְתָּם	מִן	הַפְּנִים	וְיָמָתְךָ
answered	Then the LORD	H853	Job	H4480	out of the whirlwind	and said	
H6030	H3068		H347		H5591	H559	

Additional Cross-References

Job 40:6 (References Lord): Then answered the LORD unto Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

1 Kings 19:11 (References Lord): And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake:

Nahum 1:3 (References Lord): The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

Ezekiel 1:4 (Parallel theme): And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

2 Kings 2:11 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

