

Job 38:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

Analysis

God's interrogation shifts to weather phenomena, asking if Job can command clouds to release rain on demand. 'Lift up thy voice' (rum qol, רָם קֹל) implies authoritative command, while 'abundance of waters may cover thee' (shiphah-mayim, שִׁיחָה-מַיִם) suggests overwhelming response to one's word. This question reveals the vast gulf between divine and human authority—God speaks, and nature obeys instantly and abundantly. The image recalls Genesis 1 where God's word alone creates and orders reality. It also foreshadows Christ's authority over nature (Mark 4:39-41), where His command immediately calms the storm, demonstrating His divine identity. The verse challenges Job's protests by establishing that one who cannot command rain has no standing to question the One who does. Yet it also reveals God's gracious provision—He speaks to clouds on our behalf, providing water for crops and life.

Historical Context

In agrarian ancient Near Eastern society, rain was literally life or death. Pagan cultures worshiped storm gods like Baal, offering sacrifices to obtain rain. God's question asserts that only Yahweh commands the clouds, and He does so not in response to sacrifices but according to His sovereign will. The covenant blessings and curses of Deuteronomy 28 include rain as a sign of God's favor, making this question particularly significant.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's calming of the storm demonstrate His divine authority and identity?
2. What aspects of your life do you try to control that are actually under God's sovereign command alone?
3. How should God's faithful provision of rain and seasons increase your trust in His provision of spiritual needs?

Interlinear Text

בָּתָר יְמָן	לְעֵבֶן	קֹל בָּ	וְשִׁפְעָת	מִם	תִּכְסֹבֶן
Canst thou lift up	to the clouds	thy voice	that abundance	of waters	may cover
H7311	H5645	H6963	H8229	H4325	H3680

Additional Cross-References

Job 22:11 (Parallel theme): Or darkness, that thou canst not see; and abundance of waters cover thee.

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