

Job 38:35

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?

Analysis

The divine interrogation reaches lightning—the most dramatic and fearsome natural phenomenon. 'Send lightnings' (shalach baraḳ, שְׁלַח בָּרָק) uses vocabulary of dispatching messengers on a mission. The response 'Here we are' (hinenu, הִנֵּנוּ) is the same word used when prophets and patriarchs respond to God's call (Genesis 22:1, Isaiah 6:8), suggesting personal, obedient relationship. This anthropomorphizes lightning as God's willing servants, ready to fulfill His commands instantly and joyfully. The theological implication is profound: the destructive forces of nature that terrorize humanity are actually God's obedient messengers, under His complete control and sent with purpose. This connects to both judgment (Psalm 18:14) and revelation (Exodus 19:16). Lightning that appears random or malevolent to human observers is actually divine communication and action. The verse anticipates Revelation's imagery where natural phenomena serve God's redemptive and judicial purposes.

Historical Context

Lightning was universally feared in the ancient world, often associated with divine wrath or the weapons of storm gods. God's question asserts His absolute control over what pagans worshiped or feared. Biblical theophanies frequently include lightning as a sign of God's presence and power (Exodus 19:16, Ezekiel 1:13-14), establishing it as a divine tool rather than an independent force.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing natural forces as God's obedient servants change your response to frightening circumstances?
2. What 'lightning strikes' in your life have you interpreted as random when they were actually divine messages?
3. How does the instant obedience of lightning convict and inspire your response to God's commands?

Interlinear Text

הַתִּשְׁלַח	בְּרָקִים	וְיֵלְכוּ	וְיֹאמְרוּ	לְךָ	הַנֶּחֱמָה
Canst thou send	lightnings	H1980	and say	H0	H2005
H7971	H1300		H559		

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