

Job 39:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?

Analysis

God asks: 'Knowest thou the time when the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark when the hinds do calve?' The verb yada (יְדָה, knowest) means to know intimately or experientially. Ya'ale-sela (עַלְעָלֶת, wild goats of the rock) refers to mountain goats. Shamar (שָׁמַר, mark) means to observe or watch over. The questions about animal reproduction highlight divine providence over creation's intimate details. God cares for even wild creatures beyond human observation or control, challenging Job's anthropocentric view. If God governs mountain goats' birthing, He governs Job's life though purposes remain hidden.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern peoples observed animals but lacked understanding of reproductive cycles. God's questions highlight divine knowledge exceeding human observation. The emphasis on God's care for wild (not domesticated) animals challenges utilitarian views of creation—God values creatures for their own sake, not merely human benefit. This theological point addresses Job's suffering: God's purposes extend beyond human comprehension or immediate benefit.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's care for wild animals challenge our anthropocentric view of creation?
2. What does divine providence over creation's details teach about His care for our lives even when we don't understand His purposes?

Interlinear Text

תִּדְעֵת	תְּעַתָּה	לְדִתָּה	עַלְיָה	לְלִעְתָּה	לְלִעְתָּה
Knowest	thou the time	bring forth	when the wild goats	of the rock	do calve
H3045	H6256	H3205	H3277	H5553	H2342
אֵיל וְתִשְׁמַר:					
when the hinds	or canst thou mark				
H355	H8104				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 104:18 (Parallel theme): The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats; and the rocks for the conies.

Psalms 29:9 (Parallel theme): The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.

1 Samuel 24:2 (Parallel theme): Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats.