

Psalm 107:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the watersprings into dry ground;

Analysis

This verse begins a new section describing God's providence over nations and nature. 'He turneth rivers into a wilderness' shows divine control over geography and hydrology. 'Turneth' (sum, סְמַךְ) means to set, make, or appoint. God transforms fertile river valleys into barren wasteland. 'And the watersprings into dry ground' continues the transformation from life to death, abundance to scarcity. This describes judgment—removing water is covenant curse (Deuteronomy 28:23-24). God's sovereignty includes withholding provision from rebellious nations. What He gives He can take away; prosperity depends on His pleasure.

Historical Context

Isaiah prophesied Babylon's rivers would dry (Isaiah 44:27), fulfilled when Cyrus diverted the Euphrates to conquer Babylon (539 BC). Egypt's Nile turning to blood (Exodus 7:17-21) demonstrated similar divine control. Modern examples include dried rivers, desertification, and environmental collapse—whether as natural processes or divine judgment, they testify to God's sovereignty over earth's water systems and their direct link to human flourishing or suffering.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's control over water sources demonstrate His sovereignty over nations?
2. What does withholding water as judgment teach about the source of prosperity?
3. How should environmental changes drive recognition of dependence on God's providence?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּשְׁבַּת־מִן־מֵצָא־אֵין־לְמַדְבֵּר־וְנַפְרֵר־וְתִשְׁבַּת־
He turneth rivers into a wilderness H4161 and the watersprings H4325

לְצַפְאָזָן:
into dry ground H6774

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 50:2 (Parallel theme): Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst.

Isaiah 42:15 (Parallel theme): I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.