

Zechariah 10:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

Analysis

Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain (שְׁאַלּוּ מִיְהוָה מָטָר בְּעֵת) (מַלְקוֹשׁ)—malkosh refers to spring rains (March-April) essential for harvest maturation, contrasted with yoreh (autumn/early rain). James 5:7 uses identical agricultural metaphor for patient endurance. Prayer for rain isn't mere pragmatism; it's covenant theology—acknowledging God as sovereign provider (Deuteronomy 11:13-14).

So the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain—chaziz (lightning/bright clouds) accompanies life-giving rain. **To every one grass in the field** (לְאִישׁ עֵשֶׂב בַּשָּׂדֶה)—individual provision, 'to each person,' emphasizes God's personal care. Unlike Baal fertility cults (which Israel continually apostatized toward), Yahweh alone controls weather and harvest. Prayer is required because covenant relationship, not magical manipulation, governs blessing.

Historical Context

In agrarian ancient Israel, rainfall meant survival. Without the latter rains, crops failed and famine followed. Zechariah's audience, rebuilding post-exilic Jerusalem, needed assurance that God would bless their agricultural efforts. This verse counters any temptation to return to Canaanite fertility religion.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What modern equivalents of 'rain' (provision) do you need to actively ask God for rather than assuming as automatic?
2. How does praying for daily needs reinforce dependence on God rather than self-sufficiency?
3. What's the difference between treating God as cosmic vending machine versus covenant partner in prayer?

Interlinear Text

שֶׁאֵל וִ	יְהוָה	וּמָטָר	בְּעֵת	מֶלֶק וְשׁ	יְהוָה	
Ask	so the LORD	of rain	in the time	of the latter rain	so the LORD	
H7592	H3068	H4306	H6256	H4456	H3068	
עֲשֵׂה	חֲמֻזִּים	וּמָטָר	גְּשָׁמִים	וְיֵתֵן	לָהֶם	לֹא יִשׁ
shall make	bright clouds	of rain	them showers	and give	H1992	to every one
H6213	H2385	H4306	H1653	H5414		H376
בְּשָׂדָה:	עֵשֶׂב					
in the field	grass					
H7704	H6212					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 44:3 (Parallel theme): For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

Isaiah 30:23 (Parallel theme): Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

Psalms 65:9 (Parallel theme): Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

Deuteronomy 28:23 (Parallel theme): And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.

James 5:7 (References Lord): Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

Isaiah 5:6 (Parallel theme): And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

Psalms 104:13 (Parallel theme): He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

Proverbs 16:15 (Parallel theme): In the light of the king's countenance is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.

Jeremiah 14:22 (References Lord): Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.

Jeremiah 10:13 (Parallel theme): When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.