

Job 22:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!

Analysis

Eliphaz challenges Job: "Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!" The noun gavah (גָּבָּהּ, "height") emphasizes God's exaltation. The rhetorical question expects affirmation: yes, God is transcendent. Eliphaz will argue (verse 13-14) that Job wrongly thinks God's transcendence means He doesn't observe earthly affairs. This sets up a false dilemma: either God is distant (deism) or intimately involved (theism). Reformed theology affirms both divine transcendence and immanence—God's transcendence doesn't imply distance but rather His sovereignty over all. Isaiah 57:15 captures this paradox: God dwells "in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." The incarnation supremely demonstrates this: the eternal Son took flesh, uniting transcendence and immanence in one Person. Eliphaz correctly affirms transcendence but wrongly implies Job denies divine observation.

Historical Context

Ancient cosmology conceived of God/gods dwelling above the heavens. Mesopotamian ziggurats and Egyptian pyramids attempted to bridge earth and heaven. Israel's theology affirmed God's transcendence (1 Kings 8:27—heaven of heavens cannot contain Him) while maintaining His engagement with earth (Psalm 113:5-6). This tension between divine transcendence and immanence shapes all biblical theology.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do we hold together God's transcendence and His intimate involvement in our lives?
2. What does the incarnation reveal about God's transcendence not implying distance?
3. How should God's exaltation above all creation inform both our worship and our confidence in prayer?

Interlinear Text

כֹּכֶב יְמִינָה אֲלֹתָה גַּבְהָ שְׂמִינִית וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר כֹּכֶב יְמִינָה
H3808 Is not God in the height of heaven and behold the height of the stars
H433 H1363 H8064 H7200 H7218 H3556

גֵּתְאָה
H3588 how high
H7311

Additional Cross-References

Job 11:8 (Parallel theme): It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

Ecclesiastes 5:2 (References God): Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.