

# Job 35:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Look unto the heavens, and see; and behold the clouds which are higher than thou.

## Analysis

**Look unto the heavens, and see** (הַבֵּט שָׁמַיִם וְרָאֵה, habbet shamayim ur-eh)—The imperative habbet (הַבֵּט), from nabat (נַבֵּט), means 'to look intently' or 'to gaze upon.' Shamayim (שָׁמַיִם), 'heavens,' evokes cosmic scale and divine dwelling.

**Behold the clouds which are higher than thou** (וְשׁוּר שְׁכָקִים גַּבְהָהוּ מִמְּךָ, ve-shur shechakim gavehu mimekka)—shechakim (שְׁכָקִים) means 'clouds' or 'skies,' from shachaq (שְׁחַקֵּשׁ), 'to rub away' or 'pulverize,' suggesting dust-like cloud particles.

Elihu employs creation pedagogy—directing Job's eyes upward to recognize creaturely limitation versus Creator transcendence. This method anticipates God's own teaching strategy in chapters 38-41, suggesting Elihu grasps correct pedagogical approach even if his conclusions remain incomplete. The heavens' height establishes metaphor for divine transcendence and human finitude.

This argument cuts two ways: it humbles human presumption (Job cannot command God's attention based on merit) but also risks distancing God from covenant relationship. Psalm 8 similarly begins by observing the heavens' grandeur, then marvels that God regards humanity at all ('what is man, that thou art mindful of him?'). Elihu emphasizes transcendence; the psalmist adds divine condescension. Both truths require holding in tension.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern cosmology envisioned a three-tiered universe: heavens above, earth in the middle, waters beneath. Clouds occupied the liminal space between human realm and divine dwelling. Observing celestial phenomena as theological instruction appears throughout wisdom literature (Psalm 19, Isaiah 40:26), making Elihu's pedagogical move culturally resonant.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does contemplating creation's vastness both humble us and draw us into worship?
2. What is the proper balance between affirming God's transcendence and experiencing His immanent presence?
3. When observing the heavens, do you primarily feel distance from God or wonder at His care for finite creatures?

## Interlinear Text

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וְרַא	שְׁמָמֶן	וְרַא	וְרַא	שְׁמָמֶן	וְרַא
<b>Look</b>	<b>unto the heavens</b>	<b>and see</b>	<b>and behold</b>	<b>the clouds</b>	<b>which are higher</b>

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## Additional Cross-References

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**Job 22:12** (Parallel theme): Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!

**Isaiah 55:9** (Parallel theme): For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

**Nahum 1:3** (Parallel theme): The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

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