

Psalms 108:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.

Analysis

For thy mercy is great above the heavens (כִּי־גָדוֹל מֵעַל־שָׁמַיִם הַחֶסֶד, ki-gadol me'al shamayim chasdekha)—God's chesed (covenant love, loyal kindness) exceeds the highest heavens. Me'al (above, beyond) suggests immeasurable scope. The heavens represent ultimate height and expanse, yet God's faithful love transcends even that.

And thy truth reacheth unto the clouds (וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֱמֶתָּךְ, ve'ad-shekhakim amitekha)—God's emet (truth, faithfulness, reliability) extends **unto the clouds** (shekhakim, literally 'skies,' upper atmosphere). Parallel poetic structure links chesed with emet—God's love and faithfulness are cosmic in scope.

These metaphors of vertical vastness emphasize God's attributes surpassing all human measure. Paul echoes this in Ephesians 3:18-19, praying believers would comprehend the breadth, length, height, and depth of Christ's love that 'surpasses knowledge.' God's covenant faithfulness literally cannot be overstated.

Historical Context

This verse parallels Psalm 57:10, written when David fled from Saul into the cave (1 Samuel 24). Surrounded by enemies, David looked upward and saw God's faithful love exceeding the visible heavens—circumstances couldn't contain God's character.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. When circumstances feel overwhelming, how does contemplating God's 'above the heavens' mercy provide perspective?
2. What's the difference between God's chesed (loyal love) and mere sentiment or emotion?
3. How do the paired attributes—mercy and truth—work together in God's dealings with you?

Interlinear Text

יְהוָה H3588	גָּדוֹל H1419	וְעַל H5921	שְׁמֵי יְהוָה H8064	חַסְדְּךָ H2617	יַעַד H5704
	is great		above the heavens	For thy mercy	
	יִשְׁחָק H7834	וְעַד H571			
	reacheth unto the clouds	and thy truth			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 36:5 (Grace): Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.

Psalms 103:11 (Grace): For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Psalms 89:2 (Grace): For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

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