

Psalms 108:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: and thy glory
above all the earth;

Analysis

This verse presents a prayer for God's manifest glory: 'Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens.' The word 'exalted' involves being lifted up, magnified, and acknowledged as supreme. 'Above the heavens' places God beyond all created order - transcendent over even the highest created realm. The parallel 'let thy glory be above all the earth' prays for God's glorious character and reputation to be recognized universally. This is both descriptive (God is already exalted) and prescriptive (praying for His glory to be acknowledged as such). The verse reflects a missionary impulse - a desire for God to be rightly honored everywhere. It also reflects proper theological perspective: worship centers on God's glory, not human experience. The prayer implicitly acknowledges that God's glory is currently contested or unrecognized, and longs for the day when every knee will bow (Philippians 2:10-11).

Historical Context

This verse appears in both Psalm 57:5 and 108:5, showing its liturgical significance. In the ancient worldview, 'the heavens' represented the height of creation, the dwelling place of celestial beings and the cosmic order. To pray for God to be exalted 'above the heavens' was to acknowledge His supremacy over all powers and principalities. In David's context, when Israel was surrounded by nations attributing victories to their gods (Chemosh for Moab, Dagon for Philistia, Baal for Canaanites), this prayer affirmed YHWH's absolute supremacy. During Israel's exile, when it appeared that Marduk of Babylon had defeated YHWH, such

prayers maintained theological truth against political appearances. The prayer for God's glory 'above all the earth' envisions the day when His universal sovereignty would be manifest. This anticipates prophetic visions like Isaiah 6:3 ('the whole earth is full of his glory') and Habakkuk 2:14 ('the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD').

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to pray for God to be exalted when He is already supreme?
2. How does this prayer for God's glory challenge human-centered approaches to faith that focus on personal benefit?
3. Why is it significant that God's exaltation is prayed for 'above the heavens' and not just on earth?
4. In what ways does praying for God's glory to be universally recognized shape our mission and priorities?
5. How do we reconcile prayers for God's glory to be manifest with the reality that it often remains unrecognized?

Interlinear Text

ר וְמָה	עַל	שָׁמַיִם	אֱלֹהֵי יָם	יְעֹל	כָּל
Be thou exalted	H5921	above the heavens	O God	H5921	H3605
H7311		H8064	H430		
הָאָרֶץ	כְּבוֹדְךָ:				
above all the earth	and thy glory				
H776	H3519				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 57:5 (Glory): Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; let thy glory be above all the earth.

Psalms 148:13 (Glory): Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.

Isaiah 6:3 (Glory): And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Psalms 57:11 (Glory): Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.

Psalms 21:13 (Parallel theme): Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power.

Psalms 8:1 (Glory): O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

Psalms 72:19 (Glory): And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

Matthew 6:13 (Glory): And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.