

Psalms 113:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high,

Analysis

"Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high." The rhetorical question *mi ka'YHWH Eloheinu* (who is like the LORD our God) expects the answer: none. *Mi* (who) challenges any claimant to divine uniqueness. This echoes Exodus 15:11 ("Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods?"), Isaiah 40:18, 25 ("To whom then will ye liken God?"), and Micah 7:18 ("Who is a God like unto thee?"). *Hammagbihi lashavet* (who exalts [Himself] to dwell/sit) describes God's enthronement. *Gabah* (be high/exalted) indicates elevation; *yashav* (dwell/sit/inhabit) pictures royal enthronement. God dwells on high—spatially elevated, transcendently other. Yet verse 6 balances this transcendence with immanence—He stoops to see earthly affairs. Divine transcendence and immanence coexist: infinitely above, yet intimately involved.

Historical Context

The question "Who is like the LORD?" formed Israel's central confession amid polytheistic cultures. Elijah's contest on Mount Carmel demonstrated YHWH's uniqueness—Baal couldn't answer, but YHWH sent fire (1 Kings 18:20-40). Isaiah mocked idols' impotence: craftsmen make gods that can't move, see, or save (Isaiah 44:9-20). Habakkuk similarly ridiculed idols (Habakkuk 2:18-19). During exile, Babylonian captors challenged: where is your God? Psalm 115:2-8 answers: our God is in heaven; their idols are speechless metal. The incarnation paradoxically intensifies this question: Who is like the LORD who became flesh? Philippians 2:5-11 celebrates the incomparable God who humbled Himself to death.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What competing deities or ideologies in modern culture claim the uniqueness belonging only to God?
2. How does God's dwelling "on high" (transcendence) relate to His intimate involvement in earthly affairs (immanence)?
3. What specific attributes or actions of God demonstrate His utter uniqueness?

Interlinear Text

מִי	כִּיהוָה	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	הַמְגִבִּיהַ	לְשָׁבֵת:
H4310	Who is like unto the LORD	our God	on high	who dwelleth
	H3068	H430	H1361	H3427

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 89:6 (References Lord): For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

Isaiah 40:25 (Parallel theme): To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One.

Jeremiah 10:6 (References Lord): Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might.

Exodus 15:11 (References God): Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Deuteronomy 33:26 (References God): There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.

Psalms 89:8 (References God): O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

Isaiah 40:18 (References God): To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

Isaiah 16:5 (Parallel theme): And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

Psalms 103:19 (References Lord): The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Psalms 35:10 (References Lord): All my bones shall say, LORD, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?