

Psalm 113:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven,
and in the earth!

Analysis

"Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth!" The Hebrew hamashpili lir'ot bashamayim uva'aretz (who stoops/humbles to see in heaven and in earth) captures divine condescension. Shaphel (stoop/humble/condescend) indicates lowering oneself—God must "stoop" even to observe heavens and earth! This staggering claim: creation is so far beneath God's transcendent glory that even looking at it requires condescension. Ra'ah (see/look/observe) indicates active attention. God doesn't ignore creation; He actively attends to it. But this attention requires humbling—divine stooping. This anticipates the supreme condescension: incarnation (Philippians 2:5-8). Christ's birth, life, death weren't God grudgingly entering creation but willing condescension motivated by love (John 3:16).

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern deities were typically capricious—sometimes favoring humans, often ignoring or harming them. Greek/Roman gods pursued their own interests, using humans as playthings. Against this backdrop, YHWH's attentive care was revolutionary. He heard Israel's groaning in Egypt (Exodus 2:24-25), remembered His covenant, and acted. He daily provided manna, guided by cloud/fire, gave law at Sinai. Throughout judges, kings, prophets, He remained attentively involved despite Israel's unfaithfulness. The incarnation supremely demonstrated divine condescension. Jesus didn't merely observe from heaven but

entered creation as embryo, baby, child, man—experiencing hunger, weariness, temptation, suffering, death. "He humbled himself" (Philippians 2:8).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the reality that God must "stoop" even to observe heaven and earth affect your view of His transcendent majesty?
2. What does God's willing condescension reveal about His character and love?
3. In what ways should believers imitate divine humility/condescension in relating to others?

Interlinear Text

וְבָאָצָז : בְּשָׁמָם יְמָם בְּמָשְׁפִּיל ' לְרָא וְתַּבְּמַשְׁפִּיל
Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth
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Additional Cross-References

Psalms 11:4 (Parallel theme): The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.

Psalms 138:6 (Parallel theme): Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

Isaiah 57:15 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Isaiah 6:2 (Parallel theme): Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

Job 15:15 (Parallel theme): Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.

Job 4:18 (Parallel theme): Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:

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