

Psalm 33:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men.

Analysis

The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. David shifts from God's sovereign counsel (vv. 10-11) to His comprehensive knowledge—God sees all humanity from His heavenly throne. This establishes divine omniscience as both comfort (for righteous) and warning (for wicked).

The LORD looketh from heaven (Hebrew *nabat*—look, regard, see; *shamayim*—heaven, heavens) presents God's perspective as superior and comprehensive. From heaven God sees what humans cannot—hearts, motives, all events simultaneously. This isn't passive observation but active oversight. Hebrew *nabat* often implies looking with purpose, attention, evaluation. God doesn't merely glance at humanity but carefully observes, thoroughly understands, righteously judges.

He beholdeth all the sons of men (Hebrew *ra'ah*—see, perceive; *ben 'adam*—sons of man, humanity) emphasizes universality and particularity simultaneously. All indicates no one escapes God's notice; sons of men means God knows each individual person. This is not generic awareness but specific knowledge of each human being. Nothing hidden, nothing overlooked, nothing misunderstood. God sees and knows comprehensively.

This verse addresses omniscience and immanence. Though transcendent (in heaven), God is intimately involved with creation (beholding all). Though universal (all sons of men), His knowledge is particular (each individual). Reformed theology maintains these tensions—God is both far (transcendent, sovereign, majestic) and

near (immanent, involved, knowing). His heavenly position doesn't create distance but enables comprehensive oversight.

For believers, this provides comfort—our circumstances aren't hidden from God; our sufferings don't escape His notice; our needs are known before we ask. For unbelievers, this warns—secret sins aren't secret; hidden motives are visible; private thoughts are public to God. Nothing is concealed from Him who beholds all sons of men.

Historical Context

God beholding from heaven echoes throughout Scripture. Genesis 6:5 declares God saw that wickedness of man was great. Genesis 11:5 says LORD came down to see tower of Babel (anthropomorphic language emphasizing His careful attention). Exodus 3:7 records God saying I have surely seen affliction of my people. Psalms repeatedly celebrate that God sees and knows (Psalms 11:4, 14:2, 53:2, 139:1-16).

Ancient Near Eastern peoples believed gods were distant, uninterested, or could be deceived. Israel's revelation was radical—YHWH sees everything, knows all, cannot be fooled. This shaped ethical monotheism: because God sees all deeds and knows all hearts, morality matters absolutely. No action is private; no thought is hidden. This drove Israel toward holiness and grounded prophetic calls to repentance.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does knowing that LORD looks from heaven and beholds all affect your daily choices and thoughts?

2. What comfort comes from God beholding your circumstances, and what accountability from Him seeing your actions?
3. In what ways does God's comprehensive knowledge differ from human surveillance or judgment?
4. How does God's simultaneous transcendence (in heaven) and immanence (beholding all) resolve in your understanding?
5. What should change in your life knowing that all sons of men includes you specifically under God's watchful eye?

Interlinear Text

מֵ שָׁמָיִם	הַבָּיִט	יְהִי הָ	בְּאַת	כָּל	בָּנִים
from heaven	looketh	The LORD	he beholdeth	H853	H3605
H8064	H5027	H3068	H7200		H1121
					H120

Additional Cross-References

Job 28:24 (Parallel theme): For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven;

Psalms 11:4 (References Lord): 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 53:2 (Parallel theme): God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God.

2 Chronicles 16:9 (References Lord): For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

Hebrews 4:13 (Parallel theme): Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Psalms 14:2 (References Lord): The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

Proverbs 15:3 (References Lord): The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

Psalms 102:19 (References Lord): For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

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