

Psalms 36:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.

Analysis

The dramatic shift from wickedness (vv. 1-4) to God's attributes provides deliberate contrast. God's mercy (Hebrew 'chesed,' covenant love, lovingkindness) reaches 'the heavens,' His faithfulness 'unto the clouds'—hyperbolic language expressing limitless extent. While the wicked's thoughts barely extend beyond their bed (v. 4), God's character fills the cosmos. This juxtaposition teaches that God's goodness infinitely surpasses human evil, encouraging trust despite prevalent wickedness.

Historical Context

The heavens and clouds represented the highest reaches of observable creation in ancient cosmology. Attributing divine attributes to these extremes communicated incomprehensible magnitude to the original audience.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does meditating on God's limitless mercy counter despair over human wickedness?
2. In what ways can you make God's character as prominent in your thinking as the sky above?

Interlinear Text

יְהוָה ! בְּהַשְׁמָ יִם חַסְדְּךָ אֶ מוֹנֶתְךָ עַד
O LORD is in the heavens Thy mercy and thy faithfulness H5704
H3068 H8064 H2617 H530

שֶׁחִקִּים:
reacheth unto the clouds
H7834

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 100:5 (Grace): For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Psalms 108:4 (Grace): For thy mercy is great above the heavens: and thy truth 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 57:10 (Grace): For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds.

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

Psalms 92:2 (Faith): To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night,

Matthew 24:35 (Parallel theme): Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

