

Psalm 108:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.

Analysis

Awake, psaltery and harp (עֲרָה הַנֶּבֶל וְקִנּוֹר, urah hanevel veckinnor)—David personifies his instruments, commanding them to 'wake up.' Urah (awake!) is urgent summons. The nevel (psaltery, a larger stringed instrument) and kinnor (lyre) were David's worship tools.

I myself will awake early (אֲשַׁׁר שָׁׁחָר, a'irah shakhar)—literally 'I will awaken the dawn.' David vows to wake before sunrise to praise God. Shakhar (dawn) is personified like the instruments. The meaning: David's worship will be so early, so eager, that he'll wake the dawn itself rather than the dawn waking him.

This verse captures passionate priority in worship. David doesn't fit God into his schedule—he reorders his entire day around praise. The New Testament pattern continues: Jesus rose 'a great while before day' to pray (Mark 1:35), modeling worship as first priority, not afterthought.

Historical Context

Psalm 108 is a composite, combining Psalm 57:7-11 (confidence amid enemies) and Psalm 60:5-12 (prayer for victory). David likely compiled it for specific liturgical use, possibly before battle. The 'awake early' suggests pre-dawn military preparation.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What would it look like to 'awaken the dawn' with worship—to make God your first thought, not an afterthought?
2. How does the urgency in David's 'Awake!' challenge casual approaches to worship?
3. What 'instruments' (gifts, time, energy) lie dormant in your life that God is calling you to 'awaken' for His glory?

Interlinear Text

שְׁמַר: אַע יְהָה יְכָבֵר הַבָּבָל אַע יְהָה
Awake psaltery and harp Awake early
H5782 H5035 H3658 H5782 H7837

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 69:30 (Parallel theme): I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving.

Psalms 81:2 (Parallel theme): Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

Psalms 57:8 (Parallel theme): Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.

Psalms 33:2 (Parallel theme): Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Psalms 103:22 (Parallel theme): Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

Judges 5:12 (Parallel theme): Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.

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