

Psalms 118:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.

Analysis

God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light (אֵל יְהוָה וְאֵר לָנוּ, El YHWH vayyaer lanu)—El means God, mighty one; or means light, illumination. **Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar** (אָסַר-חַג בְּעִבְתִּים עַד־קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, isru-chag ba'avotim ad-karnot hamizbe'ach)—Asar means bind, tie; chag means festival sacrifice; keren means horn (the corners of the altar); mizbe'ach means altar.

This verse is complex. "God is the LORD" uses both El and YHWH, emphasizing divine identity. "Shewed us light" means revelation, guidance, salvation (Psalm 27:1). The command to bind the sacrifice may refer to tying animals securely for slaughter, or symbolically binding oneself to the altar in dedication. Christians see Christ as the ultimate sacrifice bound to the altar-cross, illuminating humanity with salvation's light.

Historical Context

The altar had four horns at its corners where blood was applied (Exodus 29:12, Leviticus 4:7). The most holy sacrifices were offered there. This psalm's liturgy accompanied festival processions bringing sacrifices. The emphasis on light connects to Tabernacles' lamp-lighting ceremony, when Jesus declared, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does God showing light connect to Christ as "light of the world" who reveals God?
2. What does it mean to bind yourself to God's altar as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1)?
3. How do the altar's horns (representing power/strength) relate to Christ's sacrifice empowering salvation?

Interlinear Text

אֱלֹהִים	יְהוָה	וְיָאֵר	לָנוּ	אָסְרוּ	חַג
God	is the LORD	which hath shewed us light	H0	bind	the sacrifice
H410	H3068	H215		H631	H2282
בְּעֹבֹת	עַד	קַרְנֵי	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ		
with cords	H5704	even unto the horns	of the altar		
H5688		H7161	H4196		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 18:28 (Light): For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

John 8:12 (Light): Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

1 Peter 2:9 (Light): But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Esther 8:16 (Light): The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.

1 Kings 18:39 (References God): And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

Isaiah 60:1 (Light): Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

Isaiah 9:2 (Light): The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Psalms 37:6 (Light): And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

1 Kings 18:21 (References God): And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

Malachi 4:2 (Parallel theme): But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.