

Psalms 143:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Analysis

Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee. This verse contains morning petition for two essential needs: to experience God's lovingkindness and to know His guidance. Both requests flow from established trust and uplifted soul, demonstrating the connection between devotion to God and dependence on His provision.

"Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning" (הַשְׁמִיעֵנִי בַבֹּקֶר חַסְדְּךָ / hashmi'eni vaboqer chasdekha) begins with petition for experiential awareness of God's covenant love. Shama in Hiphil form means to cause to hear, make known, announce. David asks God to make His chesed (lovingkindness, covenant love, steadfast mercy) known experientially. This isn't requesting that God become merciful but that David perceive and experience the mercy that already characterizes God.

"In the morning" (בַּבֹּקֶר / vaboqer) specifies timing—dawn, daybreak, beginning of new day. Morning prayer was fundamental to Jewish piety. Beginning the day with God, seeking His presence and guidance before engaging daily activities, establishes proper priority. Morning represents new beginnings, fresh starts, renewed hope after night's darkness. David wants to begin each day experiencing God's fresh mercy, which Lamentations 3:22-23 declares is "new every morning."

"For in thee do I trust" (כִּי־בָךְ בָּטַחְתִּי/ki-vekha batachti) provides foundation for the petition. Batach means to trust, be confident, feel secure. The perfect tense indicates completed action: "I have trusted, I do trust." This established trust grounds confident prayer. Because David trusts God's character and faithfulness, he can confidently ask to experience God's lovingkindness.

"Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk" (הוֹדִיעֵנִי דֶרֶךְ־זוֹ אֵלֶיךָ/hodi'eni derek-zu elekh) adds petition for guidance. Yada in Hiphil means to cause to know, make known, teach. Derek means way, road, path, course of life. David asks for divine revelation of the right path—ethical guidance, life direction, wisdom for decisions. He doesn't claim to know the way but humbly petitions for divine teaching.

"For I lift up my soul unto thee" (נָשָׂאתִי נַפְשִׁי לְךָ/ki-eleikha nasati nafshi) concludes with declaration of devotion. Nasa means to lift, carry, raise up. Nefesh (soul) represents the whole person. Lifting one's soul to God expresses devotion, trust, offering, surrender. This physical/spiritual gesture accompanies the petition for guidance—David lifts his entire being to God, placing himself completely at God's disposal.

Historical Context

Morning prayer was central to Jewish piety from ancient times. Psalm 5:3 declares: "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." Psalm 59:16 promises: "I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning." Psalm 88:13 appeals: "Unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent [come before] thee."

The morning sacrifice in temple worship symbolized dedication of the entire day to God (Exodus 29:38-39). Beginning the day with prayer established God as priority before engaging in work, relationships, or activities. This pattern continues in Christian tradition through morning prayer, devotions, and liturgical offices. Proverbs 3:5-6 commands: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

David's petition to "know the way" reflects frequent biblical theme of divine guidance. God led Israel through wilderness with pillar of cloud and fire (Exodus 13:21). He promised: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psalm 32:8). Isaiah 30:21 assures: "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it."

Jesus identified Himself as "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6), becoming not just a guide to the path but the path itself. The Holy Spirit's role includes guidance: "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). Romans 8:14 declares: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

The connection between trusting God and seeking His guidance is vital. Proverbs 3:5-6 links them: "Trust in the LORD...and he shall direct thy paths." Guidance isn't given to the proud who think they know the way but to the humble who trust God and seek His direction. James 1:5 promises: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally."

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. Why does David petition to 'hear' God's lovingkindness rather than requesting that God be loving—what's the difference?
2. How does beginning each day with prayer for God's mercy and guidance practically shape the rest of the day?
3. What is the relationship between trusting God and seeking His guidance—why does trust precede and enable proper seeking?
4. How do believers discern 'the way wherein they should walk' in practical decisions and life direction?

5. What does it mean to 'lift up your soul' to God, and how does this posture of surrender enable reception of guidance?

Interlinear Text

הִשְׁמָע יְיָ נִי	בֹב קָרָא	חֶסֶדְךָ	כִּי	בְךָ		
Cause me to hear	in the morning	thy lovingkindness	H3588	H0		
H8085	H1242	H2617				
בְּטָ חֲתִי	הוֹדִיעַ נִי	דֶּךָ	זו	אֵלַי	כִּי	אֵלַי
for in thee do I trust	cause me to know	the way	wherein	H1980	H3588	H413
H982	H3045	H1870	H2098			
נִשְׂא אֶתִּי	נַפְשִׁי					
for I lift up	my soul					
H5375	H5315					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 48:17 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

Psalms 46:5 (Parallel theme): God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.

Psalms 32:8 (Parallel theme): I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Psalms 59:16 (Parallel theme): But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

Isaiah 30:21 (Parallel theme): And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

Psalms 143:10 (Parallel theme): Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

Psalms 90:14 (Parallel theme): O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

Psalms 27:11 (Parallel theme): Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.

Psalms 30:5 (Parallel theme): For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Psalms 86:4 (Parallel theme): Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

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