

# Psalms 148:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.

## Analysis

**Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.** The psalmist summons celestial luminaries to worship, challenging ancient Near Eastern astral worship. The Hebrew *halleluhu shemesh veyare'ach* (הַלְלוּהוּ שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ) addresses "**sun and moon**" directly—the two great lights God created "to rule the day and night" (Genesis 1:16). The parallel phrase "**all ye stars of light**" (*kol kokhevei or*, כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵי אוֹר) calls on countless stars to join the cosmic chorus.

This is polemical theology. Ancient Near Eastern cultures deified sun, moon, and stars, worshiping them as controlling deities (Shamash, Sin, etc.). Egypt worshiped Ra; Babylon honored Marduk. Israel was explicitly forbidden astral worship (Deuteronomy 4:19; 17:3). By commanding celestial bodies to praise Yahweh, the psalmist asserts they are created servants, not divine beings. They worship the Creator rather than receiving worship from creatures.

The personification of inanimate objects praising God appears throughout Scripture. Psalm 19:1 declares "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." This isn't pagan animism but recognition that creation, by existing and fulfilling its purpose, glorifies its Maker. Romans 1:20 argues creation reveals God's attributes, rendering humanity "without excuse" for idolatry. When celestial bodies shine faithfully in their courses, they testify to the Creator's wisdom and power.

## Historical Context

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Astral worship was pervasive in the ancient Near East. Mesopotamian ziggurats served as astronomical observation platforms for worshiping planetary deities. Egyptian temples aligned with solar events. Even Israel fell into this idolatry (2 Kings 21:3-5; 23:5; Jeremiah 8:2). The psalmist's command for sun, moon, and stars to praise Yahweh directly confronts this false worship, asserting monotheistic theology: only Yahweh is God; all else is creation. This became especially important post-exile, as Jews lived among Persians and Greeks with elaborate astral theologies.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalms 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does understanding sun, moon, and stars as worshipers (not objects of worship) transform how you view creation?
2. What modern forms of 'astral worship' (nature worship, cosmic spirituality) does this verse challenge?
3. In what ways does creation 'praise' God without conscious volition, and what can this teach about worship's nature?

## Interlinear Text

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הָ לַלּ וְהוּ	שֶׁשׁ מְשֶׁ	וְיָרֵחַ	הָ לַלּ וְהוּ	כָּל	כָּ וְכָבִי	אֲוֹרִ:
Praise	ye him sun	and moon	Praise	H3605	him all ye stars	of light
H1984	H8121	H3394	H1984		H3556	H216

