

Psalm 95:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

Analysis

This verse expands the worship invitation to include thanksgiving and expanded musical expression. 'Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving' establishes that entrance into God's presence requires a posture of gratitude. The phrase 'before his presence' (Hebrew 'panav') suggests standing in the face-to-face position of intimacy and accountability before God. Thanksgiving (Hebrew 'todah') is not mere polite acknowledgment but grateful testimony to God's acts of deliverance. 'Make a joyful noise unto him with psalms' repeats the concept from verse 1 but adds the specific element of 'psalms' - structured, artistic expression. This suggests worship engages both emotion (joyful noise) and intellect (structured psalm). The parallelism between the two lines shows that thanksgiving and joyful noise are complementary expressions of the same worship impulse. The emphasis on entering 'his presence' invokes the theological reality of God's dwelling place, whether understood as the Temple or as God's transcendent nearness.

Historical Context

In the ancient Temple system, thanksgiving offerings (todah) were a specific category of sacrifice (Leviticus 7:11-15) that involved not only an offering but also testimony and communal participation in a meal. The reference to 'psalms' specifically suggests the musical tradition that developed in post-exilic Temple worship under leaders like Asaph and Heman (1 Chronicles 25:1-8). The phrase 'come before his presence' reflects the theology that God dwells in the Temple and

that worshippers approach His tangible presence when gathering for worship. The combination of thanksgiving and instrumental/vocal music reflects the sophisticated worship system described in 2 Chronicles 29:25-30, where the Levites used various instruments for worship. This verse would have resonated with Jewish worshippers who understood that access to God's presence was both a privilege (requiring respectful approach) and a joyful opportunity (requiring exuberant expression).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does approaching God 'with thanksgiving' shape the quality and authenticity of our worship?
2. What is the connection between being in God's presence and expressing gratitude, and why might these two elements be paired?
3. How do structured psalms and joyful noise together create a more complete expression of worship than either alone?
4. What does it mean practically to 'come before his presence,' and how should we approach such a privilege?
5. How can thanksgiving protect us from approaching God with selfish motives or demands?

Interlinear Text

בְּרוּךְ מְהֻנָּה

פָּנָים יְהִי

בְּתַתְּפָנָם הִ

בְּזִמְרָה וְתָ

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving unto him with psalms

H6923

H6440

H8426

H2158

בְּרָעָם יְהִי

:17

and make a joyful noise

H0

H7321

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 100:4 (Parallel theme): Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

Ephesians 5:19 (Parallel theme): Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Psalms 105:2 (Parallel theme): Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.

Psalms 17:13 (Parallel theme): Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword:

Psalms 100:2 (Parallel theme): Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Psalms 7:7 (Parallel theme): So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore return thou on high.

James 5:13 (Parallel theme): Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

Micah 6:6 (Parallel theme): Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?

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

