

Psalms 98:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

Analysis

Sing unto the LORD with the harp (זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר, zammeru l'YHWH bekinnor)
—Zimrah means to make music, to sing praise accompanied by instruments. The kinnor (lyre/harp) was David's instrument (1 Samuel 16:23), associated with prophetic worship and royal psalms.

With the harp, and the voice of a psalm (בְּכִנּוֹר וְקוֹל זִמְרָה, bekinnor veqol zimrah)
—doubled emphasis on instrumental and vocal worship united. The phrase qol zimrah (voice of melody) suggests not mere singing but artful, skillful praise. Biblical worship engages both crafted beauty (instrumental music) and articulate word (psalm lyrics).

Worship befitting God's salvation requires our best offerings—cultivated skill, passionate heart, and thoughtful words. The New Testament transfers this principle: whatever we do in worship should be done skillfully and heartily to the Lord (Colossians 3:16-17, Ephesians 5:19).

Historical Context

Temple worship featured Levitical musicians with harps, lyres, and cymbals (1 Chronicles 15:16-24). This verse reflects Israel's sophisticated musical tradition, where worship was both spontaneous joy and disciplined artistry. David established this musical order.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does this verse challenge the idea that worship style doesn't matter to God?
2. What 'instruments' (gifts, skills, resources) has God given you to employ in His praise?
3. Is your worship characterized by both passionate joy and thoughtful excellence?

Interlinear Text

זָמְר ו	לִיהוָה	בְּכִנּוֹר	בְּכִנּוֹר	וְקוֹל	זִמְרָה:
Sing	unto the LORD	with the harp	with the harp	and the voice	of a psalm
H2167	H3068	H3658	H3658	H6963	H2172

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 51:3 (References Lord): For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.