

Psalms 76:0 ¶ To the chief Musician on Neginoth, A Psalm or Song of Asaph.

This is another of the psalms that identify the composer as Asaph. "Neginoth" indicates that it is to be played on stringed instruments.

Spurgeon: "The present Psalm is a most jubilant war song, a paean to the King of kings, the hymn of a theocratic nation to its divine ruler."

"paean" = a song of triumph in honor of deity

Psalms 76:1 ¶ In Judah is God known: his name is great in Israel.

Psalms 76:2 In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion.

Psalms 76:3 There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah.

Salem and Zion are both references to Jerusalem.

The psalmist opens with a statement of God's fame throughout Israel. It is noted that His tabernacle and dwelling place was acknowledged to be in Jerusalem. David had brought the ark of the covenant that represents the presence of God and placed it in a special tent or tabernacle made specifically to house it.

2 Samuel 6:17 "And they brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord."

The psalmist is either thanking God for the defeat of the enemy at Jerusalem or prophesying of a future victory or both—and I believe the latter.

I tend to think it dates to the time of David because of the reference to His "tabernacle" instead of the temple. I believe it also will be appropriately applied to the defeat of the armies of Antichrist at the Valley of Jehoshaphat (between Jerusalem and Mount of Olives) as prophesied by Joel and fulfilled at the return of Jesus.

Joel 3:1–2 "At that time, when I restore the prosperity of Judah and Jerusalem," says the Lord, "I will gather the armies of the world into the valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will judge them for harming my people, for scattering my inheritance among the nations, and for dividing up my land." (NLT – easier to understand)

Revelation 19:11 & 17-21 ¶ And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war....And

I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

Some commentators, however, attribute this psalm to a descendant namesake of Asaph regarding the defeat of Sennacherib.

2 Kings 19:31–36 “For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this. Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.”

“Selah” = a pause, a time for reflection

Psalms 76:4 Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey.

The psalmist can find no words to truly describe God’s greatness, so he declares Him more luminous, glorious, powerful and worthy than the mountains abundant with wildlife and food.

Psalms 76:5 The stouthearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep: and none of the men of might have found their hands.

Psalms 76:6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep.

The psalmist declares that even the mightiest enemy warriors have died at His rebuke; their chariots are useless, and their horses are dead. He pictures it as if the whole enemy camp looks asleep.

This verse reminds me of the power of God's word as proclaimed throughout scripture. He has but to speak or even think the thought to accomplish His will as declared by the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 55:11 "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Isaiah 14:24 "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:"

Psalms 76:7 ¶ Thou, even thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?

Psalms 76:8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still,

Psalms 76:9 When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth. Selah.

The psalmist proclaims God as One to be feared and revered. The question "...who may stand...?" is rhetorical. There is no one that can survive God's anger when directed toward him. When God pronounces judgment from heaven, it is cause for those on earth to be scared into silence. That judgment will save the meek of the earth.

This reminds me of the words of the Lord Jesus from the section of scripture known as the Beatitudes (which I happen to be memorizing).

Matthew 5:5 "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

"Selah" = a pause, a time for reflection

Psalms 76:10 Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

This was a hard verse for me. I think the NLT made the most sense: "*Human opposition only enhances your glory, for you use it as a sword of judgment.*"

I liked Spurgeon's comments: "Man with his breath of threatening is but blowing the trumpet of the Lord's eternal fame. Furious winds often drive vessels the more swiftly into port. The devil blows the fire and melts the iron, and then the Lord fashions it for his own purposes. Let men and devils rage as they may, they cannot do otherwise than subserve the divine purposes.... The verse clearly teaches that even the most rampant evil is under the control of the Lord, and will in the end be overruled for his praise."

Psalms 76:11 Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

Psalms 76:12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes: *he is terrible to the kings of the earth.*

The psalmist calls for all who make vows to the "LORD your God" to be faithful to keep them. This is in accordance with God's will.

Deuteronomy 23:21 "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee."

All those that benefit from His blessings (and everyone on earth does) should bring gifts to God who should be revered and feared. He is the One that can destroy those in power and should be feared and revered by the kings of the earth.

I am also reminded again, that whether one chooses to accept Him as such or not, the LORD He is God; there is no other. He is sovereign and in active control over His creation. I, for one, am so thankful for that truth!