

Most of this psalm of David is a part of the first song he delivered after establishing the ark of the covenant in the tent he had prepared for it in Jerusalem as recorded in 1Chronicles 16, beginning with verse 23. At some point this part of that original song was used separately as a song of praise to the LORD.

Psalms 96:1 ¶ **O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.**

Psalms 96:2 **Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day.**

Psalms 96:3 **Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.**

David encourages his people to sing a fresh new song to the LORD. As was noted in the intro, this song was written in celebration of the relocation of the ark of the covenant. The Hebrew for “new” makes reference to something fresh. I think that is a good admonition for us as we sing songs of worship and praise. It is easy to fall into a process of rote participation. Every time we sing to the LORD, however, it should be with a freshness of spirit to adore, praise and thank our LORD for His many blessings to us.

Though this is a good message for all peoples, I think in context the earth is a reference to the people of the country (from the Hebrew for “earth”) of Israel. He encourages God’s people to proclaim God’s salvation and deliverance and declare His glory and miraculous works to the people of other nations.

Principle: We should be eager to testify to God’s goodness to us, our personal experiences of His provision and protection—and we should look for the opportunity to do so every day.

Psalms 96:4 **For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.**

Psalms 96:5 **For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.**

It is a fact that the LORD is great and deserving of our praise. He is to be feared and revered above all other “gods.” These other “gods” are but worthless idols. In contrast, the LORD, the self-existent eternal God (from the Hebrew), is our Creator. We addressed this in the previous psalm.

Excerpt: All other “gods” are a result of the deception of Satan and the spiritual forces of evil and/or of man’s own creation.

Isaiah 43:10–11 “Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour.”

Isaiah 44:6 “Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”

Isaiah 45:5 “I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me....”

Isaiah 46:9 "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me...."

Spurgeon has such a way with words: "He is no petty deity, presiding, as the heathen imagined their gods to do, over some one nation, or one department of nature. Jehovah is great in power and dominion, great in mind and act; nothing mean or narrow can be found in him or his acts, in all things he is infinite. Praise should be proportionate to its object, therefore let it be infinite when rendered unto the Lord. We cannot praise him too much, too often, too zealously, too carefully, too joyfully. He deserves that nothing in his worship should be little, but all the honour rendered unto him should be given in largeness of heart, with the utmost zeal for his glory."

And again: "The reality of his Godhead is proved by his works, and foremost among these the psalmist mentions that matchless piece of architecture which casts its arch over every man's head, whose lamps are the light of all mankind, whose rains and dew fall upon the fields of every people, and whence the Lord in voice of thunder is heard speaking to every creature. The idol gods have no existence, but our God is the author of all existences; they are mere earthly vanities, while he is not only heavenly, but made the heavens."

Psalms 96:6 Honour and majesty *are* before him: strength and beauty *are* in his sanctuary.

In God's sanctuary, His temple in heaven, He is surrounded with honor, majesty, strength and beauty. John gives us a glimmer of the beauty of His heavenly sanctuary in the book of Revelation.

Psalms 96:7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

Psalms 96:8 Give unto the LORD the glory *due unto* his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts.

David encourages the people to give the LORD His due. They should serve Him with their whole being in a desire to glorify His name. He encourages them to also honor Him with their offerings as they seek to enter His presence.

Psalms 96:9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

I think of this verse a lot when I take the time to enjoy the beauty of God's creation. It always promotes a sense of awe and wonder at the many blessings with which He has surrounded us—in spite of the fact that He knew that few relative to the whole would choose to turn to Him in faith and obedience for salvation and gratitude for the beauty of creation around us.

Matthew 7:13–14 "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Psalms 96:10 ¶ Say among the heathen *that* the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously.

David urges the people to tell the people of other nations that the LORD reigns over His creation, He is the supreme authority. He has firmly established the earth and will judge people righteously.

Psalms 96:11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

Psalms 96:12 Let the field be joyful, and all that *is* therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

Psalms 96:13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

David then calls for all of creation—the heavens, the earth, the sea, the fields the trees and everything in them—to rejoice in the fact that the LORD will one day come to judge the world in righteousness. God’s words tells us that this will happen when Jesus comes to establish His kingdom and reign from the throne of David in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 9:6–7 “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

Luke 1:30–33 “And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

Revelation 20:4 “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

I can hardly wait to experience the righteous rule of God! It’s hard to imagine a ruler that is full of honor and integrity that shows no favoritism or has no personal agenda other than to honor Father God.