

PSALM 95



GOD, MY EXCEEDING JOY
A JOYFUL JOURNEY THRU THE PSALMS

August 7, 2022 – PRAISE HIM & HEAR HIM

- I. **GENRE:** Hymn for the Divine King with **Prophetic** Warning
 - A. Ps 95 begins as a divine king hymn, praising Yahweh for his all-encompassing reign in the earth.
 - B. Beginning in v. 7b, the psalm transitions to a prophetic utterance.
- II. **SETTING**
 - A. **AUTHOR:** **David**
 1. The poem is an “orphan” psalm because no authorship is stated.
 2. But the author of Hebrews was aware of a very ancient tradition associating the psalm with David. **Hebrews 4:7**.
 - B. **BACKGROUND**
 1. The psalm was written sometime after David restored sanctuary worship in Jerusalem in 1003 B.C.
 2. The 2nd half refers to events **450** years earlier when the Israelites were camped near Mt. Sinai in 1446 B.C. **Ex 17:1-7**.
 - C. **USAGE**
 1. Some had postulated that the song might have been used as music for entrance into the sanctuary or to imitate something of what it was like to enter the sanctuary and engage in worship.
 - a. In vv. 1-5, the people are invited in.
 - b. In vv. 6-7a, the people are situated before the Lord.
 - c. In vv. 7b-11, the people are listening to God’s word.
 2. In Jewish tradition, it was sung on the Sabbath before Passover.

<p>PSALM 95 by Scott Eschner © 2022</p> <p>Purpose: After calling the people to enter the sanctuary's court with joy & humility, David urges them to hear a word from Yahweh, a warning to worshippers not to divorce righteousness from their rituals.</p> <p>Type: Hymn for the Divine King with Prophetic Oracle Author: David (cf. Hebrews 4:7) Date: 1003-971 BC (after David's establishment of the Tabernacle in Jerusalem)</p>	
<p>HYMN OF CORPORATE CELEBRATION: THE LORD WORTHY OF JOYFUL PRAISE vv. 1-7a</p>	
<p>Praise for Yahweh's Kingly Power vv. 1-5</p> <p>The Summons to Worship: Fourfold Call to Joyful Praise vv. 1-2</p> <p>Two Calls Focusing on the Object of Praise v. 1</p> <p>Two Calls Focusing on the Manner of Praise v. 2</p>	<p>The Basis for the Summons vv. 3-5</p> <p>Yahweh's Divine Supremacy v. 3</p> <p>Yahweh's Terrestrial Sovereignty vv. 4-5</p> <p>Over Depths & Heights v. 4</p> <p>Over Sea & Land v. 5</p>
<p>Praise for Yahweh's Royal Grace vv. 6-7a</p> <p>The Summons to Worship: Three-fold Call to Humbly Acknowledge the Lord v. 6</p> <p>The Basis for the Summons: Three-fold Description of Their Redemptive Relationship v. 7a</p>	<p>Transition: The Psalmist's Call to Listen v. 7b</p> <p>An Urgent Address Implicit Blessing</p>
<p>The Word of the Lord: Yahweh's Call to Obedience & Blessing vv. 8-11</p> <p>Prohibition Against Hard-Heartedness v. 8a</p> <p>The Example of the Exodus Generation vv. 8b-11</p> <p>The Infamous Testing at Meribah/Massah v. 8b-9</p> <p>The Divine Response to the Rebellion vv. 10-11</p> <p>Yahweh's Evaluation of Their Wandering Hearts v. 10</p> <p>Yahweh's Curse of Exclusion from His Rest v. 11</p>	<p>MESSAGE OF DIVINE REVELATION: THE LORD WORTHY OF HEARTFELT OBEDIENCE vv. 7b-11</p>

3. **Hebrews** cites it, showing the ongoing relevance of Scripture.
 - a. The original audience of Psalm 95 was in danger of not learning from the failure of the Hebrew people in Moses' day, 4-5 centuries earlier.
 - b. The audience of the book of Hebrews was in danger of the same failure in NT times, some 1500 years after the Exodus.

D. PLACEMENT

1. Pss 91-100 are all "orphan" psalms, having no author listed.
2. Pss 93-100 are often called the Theocratic Psalms because they praise Yahweh as the ultimate King of Israel and of all the earth.
3. Pss 95 and 94 share common words and concepts.
 - a. Do / Work[er] (94:4 and 95:9)
 - b. Know (94:11 and 95:10)
 - c. Heart (94:15 and 95:10)

III. STRUCTURE:

- A. 2 major sections: a call to worship (vv. 1-7a) & to listen (vv. 7b-11).

vv. 1-7a	vv. 7b-11
Worship	Warning
Obeisance	Obedience
Privilege	Peril
Exaltation	Examination
God's Greatness	Man's Weakness

- B. The 1st half opens with 4 calls to worship (vv. 1-2) and closed with 3 calls to worship (v. 6). The 2nd half opens with an **exclamation** of hope (v. 7b) and ends with a warning of danger (v. 11).

b. NOTES & APPLICATION

- A. **God's Kingdom—a Place and a People:** The opening vv. celebrate God's supremacy over all places, but people are not spoken of as subjects of his dominion. Ultimately, God's kingdom is more about a people than a place. The 2nd half of psalm focuses on the people who would be in His kingdom.
- B. **All God's Territory:** Deep places and high places (vv. 4-5) often revered as sanctuaries of the gods. But Yahweh is Lord over all places, and greater than them all.
- C. **Covenantal Possession:** The language of mutual possession of God and His people (vv. 6-7) is borrowed from Ex 6:7 & 19:5-6.
- D. **Multiple Voices.** In the 1st half, the psalmist speaks to the people, but in the 2nd half the Lord Himself speaks.
- E. **Speaking and Listening:** The first half calls God's people to speak of His greatness; the 2nd half, to listen to His word.
- F. **God's Hand and Voice.** In v. 7a, the worshippers celebrate God's good hand. In v. 7b, they are called to ponder His voice.
- G. **The NOW of Obedience:** The term "today" in v. 7b is not limited to a 24 hour day, but speaks of any vital moment in which God's word confronts mankind.
- H. **Exclamatory if's:** In the Hebrew text, the second section (7b-11) begins and ends with "if" statements. In both cases, the "then" statements are only implied.
 - a. The 1st *if* (v. 7b) implies **blessing**—"If you were to listen to His voice, *oh the blessings that would be yours!*"
 - b. The 2nd *if* (v. 11) implies cursing—"if they were to enter my rest, *then may I be damned.*" It is a strong oath of denial.
- I. **God's Rest:** Israel never fully entered into the rest promised them in Canaan because they were unfaithful to the covenant. Hebrews 4 cites this passage a warning to Hebrew readers not to forsake the ultimate rest available in Christ alone.