

PSALM 96



GOD, MY EXCEEDING JOY
A JOYFUL JOURNEY THRU THE PSALMS

August 14, 2022 – JOYFUL SUBMISSION

I. GENRE: Hymn for the Divine King

- A. Ps 96 is a classic example of a divine king hymn.
- B. The portion which most clearly refers to Yahweh as king is v. 10, one of the two longest verses in the psalm.
- C. Yahweh is not only the King of Israel but the rightful King of all the earth.

II. SETTING

A. AUTHOR: **David**

1. In one sense, this poem is an “orphan” psalm because no author is listed.
2. But **1 Chron. 16:7, 23-33**, reveals that this poem was originally penned by David.
3. Psalm 96 appears to be a later **version** of the song, perhaps edited by David or someone else.

B. BACKGROUND

1. The psalm was written for the dedication of **sanctuary** worship in Jerusalem in 1003 B.C. (**1 Chron 16; cf. 2 Sam. 6**).
2. David’s moving the ark to Zion combined the political and religious capitals, one of his greatest achievements. It is celebrated in several songs and psalms. Cf. Ps 132.

C. USAGE

1. The original version of the song (1 Chron 16:23-33) was part of a longer song (1 Chron 16:8-36).

PSALM 96 <small>M. Scott Bakhor © 2022</small>		
FIRST SUMMONS TO PRAISE: YAHWEH AS THE WONDER OF THE WORLD vv. 1-6 The World Summoned to Praise vv. 1-3 Three-fold Call for the World to Sing to Sing in Praise to Yahweh vv. 1-2a Three-fold Command to Announce Yahweh's Deeds to the World v. 2b-3 The Basis of the Summons vv. 4-6 Yahweh's Superiority Over All Gods of the Peoples vv. 4-5 Yahweh's Incomparable Majesty in His Chamber v. 6	SECOND SUMMONS TO PRAISE: YAHWEH AS THE SOVEREIGN OF THE WORLD vv. 7-10 The World Summoned to Praise vv. 7-9 Three-fold Call for the Peoples to Acknowledge Yahweh's Glory vv. 7-8a Three-fold Command to Approach Yahweh in Humble Worship vv. 8b-9 The Basis of the Summons vv. 10 The Revelation of Yahweh's Reign v. 10a Three-fold Effect of His Sovereign Reign v. 10bcd	THIRD SUMMONS TO PRAISE: YAHWEH AS RIGHTEOUS JUDGE OF THE WORLD vv. 11-13 The Creation Summoned to Praise vv. 11-12 The Call of Sky, Land, and Sea v. 11 The Call of Field and Forrest vv. 12-13a The Basis of the Summons: The Coming Climax of Yahweh's Worldwide Justice v. 13bcd
Purpose: The psalmist calls on the world of men and nature to acclaim the surpassing excellence of Yahweh as King. He will come one day to judge the nations and solidify a worldwide realm renowned for justice and joy. Type: Hymn for the Divine King Author: David (cf. 1 Chron. 16:7, 23-33) Date: Originally 1003 BC. Reset as an independent song later.		

- a. At some later time, David (and/or possibly others) edited the material, splitting it into different songs. All of the **spinoff** songs are “orphan psalms.”

ORIGINAL	SPINOFF
1 Chron 16:8-22	Psalms 105:1-15
1 Chron 16:23-33	Psalms 96:1-13
1 Chron 16:34	Psalms 106:1
1 Chron 16:35-36	Psalms 106:47-48

- b. Several other psalms borrow language from this song.

ORIGINAL	SPINOFF 1	SPINOFF 2
1 Chron 16:28-29	Psalms 96:7-8	Psalms 29:1-2
1 Chron 16:34	Psalms 106:1	Psalms 136:1

2. One Jewish tradition (found in the LXX) claims that Ps 96 was used for the dedication of the 2nd temple in Zerubbabel’s day.

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. While Ps 95 called Israel to worship and bow in His presence, Ps 96 calls all the world into God’s presence to acknowledge Him.
4. Pss 96 and 97 both summon the nations to God’s praise for the righteousness of His reign in the earth.

III. STRUCTURE:

- A. The song **alternates** between calling the world to worship (vv. 1-3, 7-9, 11-12) with reasons for this worldwide call (vv. 4-6, 10, 13).
- B. Verse 1-3, 4-6, and 7-8a, and 8b-9 each contain **triplicated** statements.
- C. Verse 10 is the key verse in that it asserts Yahweh’s kingship. It breaks the rhythm of triplicated statements. Scholars have debated how to fit this verse into the overall outline.

b. NOTES & APPLICATION

- A. **Global Appeals:** This psalm makes a worldwide appeal for all men to turn to the Lord in worship and joy. While it does not commission Israelites to missions, it lays the groundwork for the Great Commission. Matt. 28:18-20.
- B. **Intentional Artistry:** Ps 96 is artfully composed, using thoughtful repetitions & wordcounts. In addition to using triplicated phrases, there is also the notable use of 7’s. There are 14 commands in vv. 1-10, there are 7 references to “nations” or “peoples,” and there are 7 instances of “all.”
- C. **Insulting to Idols:** Ps 96:5 makes a pun when it says “all the gods of the peoples are idols.” The term “gods” (*elohim*) rhymes with the term “idols” (*elilim*). But the term *elilim* literally means “worthless things.”
- D. **Amazing Invitation:** It may have been shocking for Hebrews to hear (no less sing!) that Gentiles were in some way welcomed into God’s court (v. 8).
 1. The sanctuary grounds were mostly limited to the Hebrews, and Gentiles were not allowed to participate in the sacrificial system.
 2. The “**offering**” mentioned here is a grain offering, not a sin offering. And other passages foresee a time when Gentiles will come to Zion to bring gifts to the King of heaven (Pss 68:29; 72:10).
 3. This song paves the way for the idea of Gentiles being fully welcomed into God’s presence.
- E. **The Joy of Creation:** Vv. 11-12 call upon the inanimate world to rejoice in God’s kingship. The creation groans, awaiting the redemption of the world.
- F. **Future Hope of the World:** The teaching of the millennial reign of Christ is rooted in part in phrases like v. 13.