
Psalm 95

Psalm 95:1–11

Our Two Choices in Life

Outline of Chapter 95

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Introduction: When it comes to the interpretation of Scripture, I believe strongly in immediate context, original language and using Scripture to interpret Scripture. I have probably quoted from Psalm 95 more than any other passage of Scripture since I began writing. However, I am not the first person to do this; the unnamed writer of Hebrews quoted this psalm no less than three times in his epistle. The psalmist begs his readers or listeners: [Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts!](#) (Psalm 95:7b–8a).

When I first began exegeting this psalm, I felt that it was properly placed with the Pentateuch, as it covers Gen X in the book of Exodus. However, this seems to be a companion psalm to Psalm 96, which is clearly a part of the celebration of the moving of the Ark to Jerusalem under David. However, like many psalms, there is more of a universal feel to this psalm; it deals with positive volition and negative volition; it deals with believers observing God's power and still being negative toward Him. It deals with the celebration and glorification of Jesus Christ, and the reasons why. Therefore, there are a number of appropriate times to teach this psalm.

This psalm begins one way and ends completely differently. At first, it sounds as though this will be a psalm of little happy thoughts; and then, suddenly, midway through the psalm, the author speaks of the hardening of one's heart, and there is this sudden turn to warning and speaking of gen X, the generation which God struck down in the desert. I am only speculating, but my feeling is that the author of this psalm sat down to write a psalm of happy thoughts and suddenly found himself gripped by the Spirit of Life and led in a different direction, changing the entire tenor of this poem.

I think the key to this psalm is the two basic choices which we have in this life: positive volition toward God or negative volition toward God. We face this at salvation: do we believe in Jesus Christ or not; and we face this in the life that we lead afterwards: do we stay in fellowship or do we rebel against God? In this psalm, we are first enjoined to sing to God and to come before Him with thanksgiving (vv. 1–7a). In this first portion of Psalm 95, there are two keys: *how God ought to be praised* and *why God ought to be praised* (this will be **summed up** after v. 7a with an extended quote by **Matthew Henry**).

The alternate approach is that of the Meribah Generation, those who moaned and complained continually before God in the desert wilderness (vv. 7b–11), despite the fact that He saw to their every need and was ready to bring them into the Land of Promise. God abhorred this generation (Psalm 95:10) and left their dead bodies strewn throughout the desert (Num. 14:23, 28–30: [They will by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor will any of those who spurned Me see it. "Say to them, 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you; your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me. Surely you will not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.](#)).

We begin this psalm with several exhortations to sing for joy to Jehovah, to shout joyfully to Him in the first two verses. In vv. 3–7a, we are given ample reasons why we ought to praise Him: the earth and all that is in it was made by Him and belongs to Him (vv. 4–5). Then the psalmist enjoins us to come before God in worship, (v. 6);

and tells us that we should come before Him because we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand (v. 7a).

Beginning with v. 7b, this psalm takes a dark turn. It focuses in on the generation of failure, Gen X, those who were adults when leaving the land of Egypt. This generation tried and tested God (vv. 8–9) and God loathed this generation (v. 10a). The key is, this generation went astray in their thinking and did not know Bible doctrine (v. 10b); and the end result is, God would not allow them entrance into the Land of Promise (v. 11).

It is sometimes instructive to see how someone else has divided up this psalm.

Barnes Outlines Psalm 95

- I. An exhortation to praise and worship God. **Psalm 95:1–2**
- II. Reasons for offering such praise. **Psalm 95:3–7** :
 - (a) He is a great God. **Psalm 95:3**
 - (b) He has made all things, and all things are under his control. **Psalm 95:4–5**
 - (c) He is our Maker. **Psalm 95:6**
 - (d) He is our God, and we are his people. **Psalm 95:7a**
- III. An exhortation not to harden the heart; not to be perverse and rebellious. **Psalm 95:7b–11**.
This is enforced by the example of the Israelites in the wilderness, and by the results which followed from their tempting God, and provoking his wrath. The appeal is founded on the fact that, in consequence of their rebellion, they were shut out of the promised land. On the same principle, if we are rebellious, we shall be excluded from heaven. Let me append Barnes' remarks by saying, *if we are rebellious insofar as we do not trust in Christ Jesus*, we will be excluded from heaven. We cannot condemn Gen X to hell just because they are spectacular failures. Now, they may go into heaven without any rewards, but they will have perfect happiness just like those who will have great rewards.

No matter how you slice it up, almost every commentator presents vv. 7b–11 as a new section. Even most of the English translations visually set this portion apart from the rest of the psalm.

Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95 introduction (edited).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

We have a limited view of God; God is so multifaceted that we do not see but a small portion of His character manifested in any situation. We have Christians and pseudo-Christians whose concept of God as their best buddy who hangs with them and to Whom they speak informally as they would to one of their droogs. However, this psalm begins that way, albeit not near as informally, and then suddenly it reveals God's response to those in rebellion to Him, which is anything but sweet little happy thoughts.

The tenor of this psalm is very similar to Asaph's work. It begins very similarly to Psalm 81:1: **Sing aloud to God, our strength; shout for joy to the God of Jacob**. This psalm will also drift into the history of Israel; particularly the time of Moses, a favorite theme of Asaph. For these reasons, it would not be a shock to me if Asaph turned out to be the human author of this psalm; however, this is speculation. The Latin Vulgate, Septuagint, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Syriac all ascribe this psalm to David.¹ The Hebrew and Chaldee do not.

A portion of this psalm, quoted by the author of Hebrews, is preceded by the phrase **He again fixes a certain day, "Today," saying in David...** (Heb. 4:7a). However, since David is the human author of so many of these psalms, the language allows for this to simply reference the psalms in general, rather than to specify him as the author of

¹ The final 3 according to Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95 introduction.

this particular song.² So the quotation from Hebrews does not indicate that David is, without a doubt, the author of this psalm, although it certainly seems more likely. The NIV Study Bible speculates that a Levite or a priest read this to the assembled Israelites at the temple.³ *Calmet and other eminent critics believe that it was composed during the time of the captivity, and that the apostle only followed the common opinion in quoting it as the production of David, because in general the Psalter was attributed to him.*⁴ Certainly, there are many speculative ideas with regards to the authorship of this psalm, but I don't know that there is any sort of real support for these ideas.

Having grown up spiritually under R. B. Thieme Jr., I am used to things being presented dogmatically. When it comes to the essentials of the faith, dogmatism is called for. So, it is dogmatically true that we are saved by faith alone in Christ alone; it is absolutely true that believers get out of fellowship by sinning and that we get back into fellowship by naming our sins to God; and it is a solid fact that the military is an honorable profession and that the military is essential to a nation's freedom. However, when it comes to such things as, *who wrote this psalm*, there is no reason to be dogmatic. Because David is mentioned in Hebrews as the author and because his name is affixed to this psalm in the Greek and Latin, I certainly lean toward David being the author. In fact, I give this a 90% certainty. However, this is a non-essential of the faith, a matter of speculation, and we are allowed to be less than dogmatic when dealing with these non-essentials.

Furthermore, we do not know when this psalm was written. It was certainly after the entrance of Israel into the Land of Promise and it certainly speaks of the Hebrew people specifically. The time of David and Asaph is a reasonable time period in which to assume this song was written. The occasion, or the reason, for this psalm, is equally nonspecific. As I have said, it is just as though the author had sat down to write one psalm and suddenly found himself borne by the Spirit to write something entirely different. In any case, the number of times this psalm is quoted authoritatively in the New Testament indicates that there is no doubt as to its divine authority and authorship.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Psalm 95 Inscription

Slavishly literal:

A praise of a song by the David.

A song of praise by David.

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate
Masoretic Text

A canticle for David himself. laus cantici David
Not found.

Moderately literal:

Praise of a song by David.

Psalm
95 Greek
inscription

² An interesting speculation, if only to myself: the author of Hebrews probably read this psalm in the Septuagint, which attaches David's name to the psalm. The author of Hebrews therefore may have thought that David was the author, yet, this portion of the verse was written in such a way as to allow for the possibility that David was not the author. I guess the bigger issue that I am wondering about is if it is possible for a writer of Scripture to have an incorrect notion of anything which he actually commits to paper, a notion which is morally and spiritually neutral, but a notion which is wrong; and then for God the Holy Spirit to see that this notion is recorded in such a way as to make what was written correct. That is, here the writer of Hebrews may have thought David wrote Psalm 95, but when he committed this thought to paper, it was written in such a way, through the instrumentality of God the Holy Spirit, that we would not misconstrue this to say that David was actually the author of this psalm. And then, again, perhaps this speculation does not interest you in the least.

³ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 880.

⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95 introduction.

Septuagint [The praise of a Song by David.](#)

Significant differences: This inscription is not found in the Hebrew at all. The Greek and Latin appear to be identical; I do not have this phrase in my English Peshitta. However, according to two commentators, this inscription is found in the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions.⁵

Apart from the Complete Apostles' Bible, I am not aware of any translation which includes this inscription. In fact, I am not even aware of a translation which even footnotes this discrepancy.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

None have this inscription.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Apostles' Bible [The praise of a Song by David.](#)

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

None have this inscription.

What is the gist of this verse? David is clearly named as the author of this psalm.

Psalm 95 Inscription Text from the Greek Septuagint (Psalm 94 in LXX)

| Greek/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | Strong's Number |
|--|---|---|-----------------|
| αἶνος) [pronounced <i>El-noss</i>], which | <i>a saying, proverb; praise [for benefits received or expected], laudatory discourse</i> | masculine singular noun; nominative case | Strong's #136 |
| hōdê (ὠδὴ, ἦς, ῆ) | <i>a song (of praise or thanksgiving), ode</i> | feminine singular noun, genitive/ablative case | Strong's #5602 |
| This word is used for songs of believers as well as songs of idolaters. | | | |
| My online Bible incorrectly lists this as Strong's #3592, which is a near demonstrative pronoun. | | | |
| tô (τῷ) [pronounced <i>toh</i>] | <i>in the; by the; by means of the</i> | masculine singular definite article; locative, dative, or instrumental case | Strong's #3588 |
| David (Δαυῖδ, ó) | transliterated <i>David</i> | proper masculine noun | Strong's #1138 |

Translation: [Praise of a song by David.](#) This is a very odd inscription indeed. David is reasonably the author, and in Psalm 96, which appears to be a companion psalm, there are many more evidences of this. However, the second half of this psalm will warn the listener not to be like the Gen X (or, if you would rather, the Meribah Generation). The final 4 verses will excoriate this generation, ending with, "I swore in My anger, "Truly they will not enter into My rest!" This is fascinating material for a *song of praise*.

⁵ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95 introduction.

Let me hasten to add, this inscription is not found in the Hebrew, but only in the Greek and Latin, as well as the Ethiopic, Arabic, and Syriac.⁶ I do not have an English translation of the Ethiopic or the Arabic, and my Syriac version does not have any of the inscriptions.

In Psalm 96, I provided some theories about why the Greek/Latin inscription is probably valid. Here, we have less to work with here (however, the existence of this inscription in so many languages and the fact that it is quoted in Hebrews along with David's name suggest that David did write this psalm). My guess, at this point, is, Jewish tradition added many of these inscriptions long after the fact—before 300 B.C. but considerably after 1000 B.C. These inscriptions revealed a long-standing viewpoint, but were not found with the original text. Therefore, the Masorites and the copyists before them, recognizing that this is the Word of God, left these insertions out; and the Greek and Hebrew translators of the LXX included them for their historical importance. Let me emphasize, this is speculation and nothing more. The fact that Jerome included these same inscriptions in the Latin Vulgate supports my theory. All I am doing is proposing a theory as to *why* we find these inscriptions in the Greek and the Latin, but not in the Hebrew.

In Psalm 96, we also move from praising God to God's final judgment. Psalm 95 we end with a judgement in time; in Psalm 96, we end with eternal judgment. In fact, there are a great many **parallels** in Psalms 95–101, some of which will be explored by **Bullinger** later on in this exegetical study.

Option 1: The Psalmist Enjoins Us to Worship God

**Come, let us sing to Y^ehowah
let us shout to a rock of our deliverance.**

Psalm
95:1

**Come, let us sing to Y^ehowah
[and] let us shout out to the Rock of our
salvation.**

Come, let us sing to Jehovah and let us shout out to the Rock of our salvation.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

Come, let us sing to Y^ehowah
let us shout to a rock of our deliverance [or, *Jesus*].

Septuagint

Come, let us exult to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to God our Saviour.

Significant differences:

The first verb which enjoins us *to sing loudly and exuberantly* is not strongly different from the Greek verb, which means *to exult, to show joy*. The second pair of verbs are closer in meaning. However, the big difference is *God* in the Greek as compared to *rock* in the Hebrew. In fact, the Greek, Latin and Syriac all have *God* instead of *rock*. Now, although that is a big difference, but it is clear that God is our Savior and the Rock (Jesus Christ) is our Savior. So, even though there is some disparity in the ancient manuscripts, there is no serious problem with doctrinal differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| CEV | Sing joyful songs to the LORD! Praise the mighty rock where we are safe. |
| Good News Bible (TEV) | Come, let us praise the LORD! Let us sing for joy to God, who protects us! |
| <i>The Message</i> | Come, let's shout praises to GOD, raise the roof for the Rock who saved us |
| New Century Version | Come, let's sing for joy to the Lord. Let's shout praises to the Rock who saves us. |
| New Jerusalem Bible | Come, let us cry out with joy to Yahweh, |

⁶ The latter 3 according to Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95 introduction.

acclaim the rock of our salvation.
 New Life Version Come, let us sing with joy to the Lord. Let us sing loud with joy to the rock Who saves us.
 Revised English Bible Come! Let us raise a joyful song to the LORD,
 A shout of triumph to the rock of our salvation.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English O come, let us make songs to the Lord; sending up glad voices to the Rock of our salvation.
 Easy English (Churchyard) Come, we will sing together to the *LORD!
 We will shout aloud to the *Rock that makes us safe!
 HCSB Come, let us shout joyfully to the LORD, shout triumphantly to the rock of our salvation!
 JPS (Tanakh) Come, let us sing joyously to the LORD,
 raise a shout for our rock and deliverer;...
 NET Bible® Come! Let's sing for joy to the LORD!
 Let's shout out praises to our protector who delivers us [Hebrew: "to the rocky summit of our deliverance."]
 The Scriptures 1998 Come, let us sing to יהוה! Let us raise a shout to the Rock of our deliverance.
 Today's NIV Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
 let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Conservative Version O come, let us sing to LORD. Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
 LTHB O come, let us sing to Jehovah; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.
 NASB O come, let us sing for joy to the LORD,
 Let us shout joyfully to the rock of our salvation
 Young's Literal Translation Come, we sing to Jehovah, We shout to the rock of our salvation.

What is the gist of this verse? We are called upon to sing to Jehovah and to shout out with joy to the Rock of our salvation.

| Psalm 95:1a | | | |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e] | go, come, depart, walk; advance | 2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative | Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229 |
| rânan (נָנַן) [pronounced raw-NAHN] | to shout for joy, to celebrate with shouting; to celebrate in a loud voice | 1 st person plural, Piel imperfect; with the voluntative hê | Strong's #7442 BDB #943 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e] | to, for, towards, in regards to | directional/relational preposition | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH] | transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah | proper noun | Strong's #3068 BDB #217 |

Translation: [Come, let us sing to Y^ehowah...](#) This is a call to celebrate what God has done on their behalf. Both Psalm 95 and 96 begin with a call for us to sing to Jehovah. The idea is, these are psalms, and they were meant to be sung aloud and in a group (because of the 1st person plurals). Psalms 98 and 100 begin with imperatives to also sing out to Jehovah (although the verb is different in Psalm 100).

By application, I believe that it is reasonable for us to sing doctrinal songs in church.

Psalm 95:1b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| rûwā ^ʿ (רוּא) [pronounced roo-AHG] | <i>to shout, to raise a shout, to cry out, to give a blast, are caused to shout</i> | 1 st person plural, Hiphil imperfect; with the voluntative hê | Strong's #7321 BDB #929 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced ʿ] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| tsûwr (צוּר) [pronounced tzoor] | <i>rock, cliff</i> | masculine singular construct | Strong's #6697 BDB #849 |
| yêsha ^ʿ (יְשַׁע) [pronounced YAY-shahj] | <i>deliverance; aid; salvation; safety, welfare</i> | masculine singular noun with the 1 st person plural suffix | Strong's #3468 BDB #447 |

The Greek, Latin and Syriac all read *the God our Savior*, instead of *the Rock of Salvation*. Both of these designations speak of Jesus Christ, but I have no explanation why the Greek reads one way and the Hebrew another at this juncture. However, as is nearly always the case, no major or minor doctrine is impacted by this difference. My point is, no one came along and thought, "Hmm, this does not support what I believe in; let me make some changes to the text." It could simply be a difference in how the song is sung (which is one possible explanation for the differences between 1Chron. 16 and Psalm 96).

Translation: [...\[and\] let us shout out to the Rock of our salvation.](#) These same verbs were both found in Psalm 81:1, indicating a similarity of style. The verb found here is reasonably translated *to shout, to shout out*. It is used for warlike shouts (Joshua 6:16 1Sam. 17:20); for the shout of triumph, (Judges 15:14); and for the sound or blast of a trumpet (Num. 10:9 Joel 2:1). Such praise in public worship would no doubt be dynamic and animated.⁷ One might envision this song being sung, and then shouts from the audience at this juncture. At Berachah Church, on some military holidays, portions of the various military hymns are played, and for each one, servicemen from that service will shout out *urah!* (or whatever their shout is). It is actually quite stirring and I am sure there is a great comradery among the men in the congregation who do this. I envision the public singing of this psalm as being quite similar.

So this is a shout of triumph, of victory. Generally with such a shout, there are winners and losers. In v. 3, the winner will be Jehovah Elohim and the loser will be the gods of the heathen. At the end of this psalm, those who hear and give attention to God's voice are winners; those who do not are losers (like the Meribah generation in vv. 7b–11).

God was known more in the Old Testament as the Rock of their salvation than in the New. ["Y^ehowah lives, and blessed be my Rock and exalted by the God of the Rock of my salvation."](#) (2Sam. 22:47). The idea of a rock is permanence, stability and strength. [Jehovah is my strength, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my rock; I will trust in Him; He is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower](#) (Psalm 18:2). However, there are New Testament passages which refer to Jesus Christ as the Rock: [It stands written, "Behold, I lay in Zion a](#)

⁷ From Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:1.

Stumbling-stone and a Rock-of-offense, and everyone believing on Him shall not be put to shame." (Rom. 9:33 Isa. 8:14; compare 1Peter 2:8). **And all were baptized to Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were scattered in the wilderness** (1Cor. 10:2–5; see Ex. 17 Num. 20). Paul clearly tells us that the Rock in the desert wilderness was Jesus Christ. Interestingly enough, the references to Christ as the Rock in the gospels requires careful exegesis (see Matt. 7:24–29 16:18 Luke 6:48).⁸

If you have studied Psalm 96 already, then you know there is a line where we have a word which could either be translated *salvation* or possibly transliterated *Joshua* (*Jesus*). The final word of this verse is a similar word, with the same stem, but it would not be an abbreviated form of *Joshua*. However, the *Rock of our Salvation* (the final words of v. 1) is clearly Jesus Christ.

**Let us go before His faces in thanksgiving;
in a song, we shout to Him.**

Psalm
95:2

**Let us come before His face in
thanksgiving [or, *confession* or *praise*];
we will shout out to Him with a song.**

**Let us go before Him with confession, thanksgiving and praise;
we will celebrate by singing psalms to Him.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

Let us go before His faces in thanksgiving;
in a song, we shout to Him.

Septuagint

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise to Him
with psalms.

Significant differences:

How we praise God—with a *song*—can also be rendered *psalm*. Therefore, there are no significant differences between the Greek and the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Come to worship him with thankful hearts and songs of praise.

Good News Bible (TEV)

Let us come before him with thanksgiving and sing joyful songs of praise.

The Message

Let's march into his presence singing praises, lifting the rafters with our hymns!

New Century Version

Let's come to him with thanksgiving.

Let's sing songs to him,...

New Life Version

Let us come before Him giving thanks. Let us make a sound of joy to Him with songs.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English

Let us come before his face with praises; and make melody with holy songs.

Easy English (Churchyard)

Come into (God's) house and thank him!

Tell him that he is great!

(Do it) with music and with songs!

*God's Word*TM

Let's come into his presence with a song of thanksgiving. Let's shout happily to him with psalms.

⁸ The Rock upon which a house is built is Jesus Christ, Who is a solid foundation. The Rock upon which the church is built is not Peter, but Jesus Christ.

HCSB [Let us enter His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout triumphantly to Him in song.](#)

JPS (Tanakh) [let us come into His presence with praise; let us raise a shout for Him in song!](#)

NET Bible® [Let's enter his presence \[Hebrew "meet his face"\] with thanksgiving! Let's shout out to him in celebration \[Hebrew "with songs of joy"\]!](#)

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version [Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!](#)

WEB [Let's come before his presence with thanksgiving. Let's extol him with songs!](#)

Young's Literal Translation [We come before His face with thanksgiving, With psalms we shout to Him.](#)

What is the gist of this verse? The psalmist calls upon us to come before God with thanksgiving and to sing psalms loudly to Him.

| Psalm 95:2a | | | |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| qâdam (קָדַם) [pronounced kaw-DAHM] | <i>to precede, to go before; to get before; to anticipate; to do before; to rush on; to meet, to go to meet anyone; to bring when followed by a bêyth preposition</i> | 1 st person plural, Piel imperfect; with the voluntative hê | Strong's #6923 BDB #869 |
| pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM] | <i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i> | masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #6440 BDB #815 |
| When found by itself, pânîym, without a preposition preceding it and with a personal possessive pronoun, can be used for doing or saying something to someone, in front of someone or in their presence. | | | |
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| tôwdâh (תּוֹדָה) [pronounced toe-DAW] | <i>thanksgiving; praise, a giving of praise to; a thanksgiving choir; confession; admission, acknowledgment; a procession, a line</i> | feminine plural noun | Strong's #8426 BDB #392 |

Psalm 95:2a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|

This is a very difficult word, because as soon as you allow for the two basic meanings—a *confession* or *thanksgiving*—you allow for certain passages to be interpreted in two very different ways. For instance, is Lev. 7:12–15 (or 2Chron. 29:31 33:16 Psalm 56:12) about offering thanks, or is it a confession of sin? One of the nice things about the 1997 edition of *The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance of the Old Testament* is that in the back it has the English words and how many different Hebrew words match them. What I was expecting to find was several different Hebrew words for *thanksgiving* or for *confession*, but I did not. In fact, this is the word used for both of them. For *thanksgiving*, there is one additional Hebrew noun offered up, which is used but one time in Scripture; and the Hiphil of a verb is translated *thanksgiving* at least once. This is the *only* noun translated *confession*. This surprised me. The cognate verb allows for both meanings, which, in tern, allows for both meanings here. In the Septuagint, the corresponding Greek word means *to confess* in Joshua 7:19, but it means *praise, thanksgiving* in this passage. *Thanksgiving* appears to be the primary meaning, however.

Translation: [Let us come before His face in thanksgiving](#) [or, *confession* or *praise*];... We begin this verse with the Piel imperfect voluntative of *qâdam*, one of the more interesting words as it is rendered both *to prevent* and *to come*. Contrast 2Sam. 22:6 Job 3:12 30:27 Psalm 18:18 (*prevent*) with Deut. 23:4 Psalm 89:14 Micah 6:6 (*to come before*). In all cases, we are dealing with the Piel stem. The connection between the two seemingly disparate meanings is that when you stand before someone or move in front of them, you are preventing them from moving forward. You are right in their face. This is not necessarily a bad thing, as we are enjoined to do so by the psalmist in this verse. We are to get right in front of God, as it were, right before His face (literally). He cannot go to the left or to the right because we are right there in front of Him. This is how the verb and the direct object interact here.

Now, coming *before God* or *into His presence* can mean several things. Spurgeon suggests that this means coming before His holy Ark.⁹ I reject that simply because 99% of the Israelites never saw the Ark of God ever—not once in their lifetimes. In fact, many who saw the Ark close up died (1Sam. 6:19). Coming into God's presence can refer to an actual place—e.g., outside of the Tabernacle where sacrifices are offered. It could refer to the celebration surrounding David's bringing the Ark into Jerusalem. However, anytime that we pray or listen to an accurate MP3 lesson, we are coming into the presence of God. The study that I am involved with is in the presence of God; you reading these words right now, if you are filled with the Holy Spirit, are in the presence of God.

We are to approach God with thanksgiving when we are in prayer. This is a recognition in our soul of the provisions which God has given us. This is a part of our walk before angelic observance. [Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him; bless His name. For, Y^ehowah is good; His grace is everlasting and His faithfulness \[is\] to all generations](#) (Psalm 104:4–5). Although the context of that psalm involves entrance into the gates of the tabernacle, the principle is the same for entering into God's holy gates of prayer. For we are even enjoined to: [Sing to Y^ehowah with thanksgiving; sing praises to our God on the lyre](#) (Psalm 147:7). All spiritual activity should be intermixed with thanksgiving. [“But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving. That which I have vowed, I will pay. Deliverance is from Y^ehowah.”](#) (Jonah 2:9). [And don't become drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your thinking to the Lord, always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father](#) (Eph. 2:18–20).

On the human level, there are some spoiled children (many, in fact) and even a number of adults who have no sense of thanksgiving toward anyone. You don't want to do anything for these people; you don't want to give them a gift, you don't want to give them your time, you don't want to sacrifice even an iota of whatever is yours for them

⁹ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 95:2.

because it means nothing to them. The lack of a verbalized *thank you* (or a sincere one), means total lack of capacity of the soul. If the person has no capacity for it, why give it to him in the first place? God deals with us in the same way. Except when He is making a point, there are many blessings which we never receive, that God has in the mail room ready to ship to us. Why bless us if the blessing means nothing to us? Why bless us if we have no capacity for it? If God tells us not to *cast our pearls before swine* (Matt. 7:6), then obviously He will follow His own advice.

Let me give you an example of romance: why would God introduce a man to his right woman if this man is going to abuse her, berate her, bully her, and possess not one iota in his soul of thankfulness for this woman? What exactly is the point? If this man has some capacity for love and some capacity for thankfulness, then giving him his right woman has some meaning, and it is a gift that he can appreciate.

Another example: there are some family heirlooms which are passed down from generation to generation. In my family, I suspect it will be the paintings which my father has done. Now, if I am to pass along the paintings in my possession to a son who is 4 or 14, it will have very little meaning to him. If I pass it along to a son who is 34—one with some capacity for life—then such a gift will have real meaning. For women, this could be a string of pearls which has been with the family for several generations or a ring or some kind of jewelry; for men, it may be a watch which was brought from Germany by a great, great grandfather who moved here, and that was his only prized possession.

The key to capacity in the soul for the believer is Bible doctrine in the soul. The more you know God and the more you recognize your place in this world, the greater your capacity for life and the more likely that you have some true measure of thanksgiving in your soul for what you receive.

Of course, this does not mean that we cite our blessings by rote in order to pump God for more materialistic blessings. This is no more beneficial than the vain repetitions of the religious (Matt. 6:7). You don't get to work God. He can see our motivations; He examines the inner man. [Wouldn't God find this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart](#) (Psalm 44:21). ["I, Y^ehowah, search the heart; I test the emotions, even to give to each man according to his ways and according to the results of his deeds."](#) (Jer. 17:10). We can't even use the excuse that we are self-deluded, as God's Word will help us in that respect: [For the Word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword; piercing even to the division of the soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart](#) (Heb. 4:12). The key is what is in the soul.

| Psalm 95:2b | | | |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| zâmîyr (זִמְרָה) [pronounced zaw-MEER] | <i>song; psalm</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #2158 BDB #274 |
| This word is also spelled zâmîr (זִמְרָה) [pronounced zaw-MEER]; and z ^e mirâh (זִמְרָה) [pronounced zem-ee-RAW]. | | | |
| rûwâ ^c (עוֹרָה) [pronounced roo-AHÇ] | <i>to shout, to raise a shout, to cry out, to give a blast, are caused to shout</i> | 1 st person plural, Hiphil imperfect | Strong's #7321 BDB #929 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |

Translation: ...we will shout out to Him with a song. In this verse we have the repetition of the word *rûwā* (from v. 1b), which is in the Hiphil imperfect, meaning that they have been caused to shout. The invitation of the psalmist is so different from the end of this psalm, as we will see.

The *shouting out* to God will be organized and melodic—it will be done with a song or a psalm. In these areas, we have to have some soul function beyond emotion. I gave the illustration earlier of Berachah church and the various servicemen who would make various sounds when they hear their anthem being played—this is a soul response and I am sure it involves memory and comradery and an appreciation for the experiences which they have had. This is what we need in our lives is a soul response to God for all that He has given us and for this wonderful life.

For the first two verses, we are told to come to God and to sing to Him. In v. 3, we are told *why* we ought to come before Him in thanksgiving and praise.

**For Êl great Y^ehowah
and a King great above all elohim.**

Psalm
95:3

**For Y^ehowah [is] a great God [Êl]
and [He is] a great King over all gods,...**

For Jehovah is a great God and He is a great King over all gods.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Masoretic Text | For Êl great Y ^e howah and a King great above all elohim. |
| Septuagint | For the Lord is a great God, and a great king over all gods; <u>for the Lord will not cast off his people</u> . The Hebrew and the Alexandrian Septuagint omit the 2 nd sentence. |
| Significant differences: | The 2 nd phrase is only found in the LXX; it is not found in the Hebrew, Latin, Syriac or even in the Alexandrian Septuagint. |

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| CEV | The LORD is the greatest God, king over all other gods. |
| Good News Bible (TEV) | For the LORD is a mighty God, a mighty king over all the gods. |
| <i>The Message</i> | And why? Because GOD is the best, High King over all the gods. |
| New Jerusalem Bible | For Yahweh is a great God, a king greater than all the gods. |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Complete Apostles' Bible | For the Lord is a great God, and a great King over all gods; for the Lord will not cast off His people. |
| Easy English (Churchyard) | (This is) because the *LORD is the great God. He is the great king that is more important than every other god. |
| JPS (Tanakh) | For the LORD is a great God, the great king of all divine beings. |
| NET Bible® | For the Lord is a great God, a great king who is superior to [Hebrew: <i>above</i>] all gods. |
| NIRV | The Lord is the great God. He is the greatest King. He rules over all of the gods. |

The Scriptures 1998

For יהוה is a great Ēl, And a great Sovereign above all mighty ones.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Voice in the Wilderness For Jehovah is the great and Mighty God, and the great King above all gods.
 WEB For Yahweh is a great God, A great King above all gods..
 Young's Literal Translation For a great God is Jehovah, And a great king over all gods.

What is the gist of this verse? In the next few verses, we are told *why* we should come to God in song and with thanksgiving. In v. 3, God is greater than all other gods.

| Psalm 95:3a | | | |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| kîy (כי) [pronounced kee] | <i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i> | explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition | Strong's #3588 BDB #471 |
| Ēl (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced ALE] | <i>God, god, mighty one, strong, hero</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #410 BDB #42 |
| gādôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced gaw-DOHL] | <i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i> | masculine singular adjective | Strong's #1419 BDB #152 |
| YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH] | transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i> | proper noun | Strong's #3068 BDB #217 |

Translation: For Y^ehowah [is] a great God [Ēl]... The Hebrew tends to list the subject after the predicate nominative (or after the direct object), which is why you see the order we have here with Y^ehowah being listed first in the translation. This sentence simply explains why Jehovah Elohim is worthy of our praise, our songs and our adoration.

This may be a good time to examine the Doctrine of the **Old Testament Names for God**. At some time, I may want to move this doctrine into the book of Genesis. Some of the charts include in this doctrine include: The Names of God and the Meanings of these Names, How These Names Refer to God's Interaction with Man, How These Names Relate to God's Salvation for Man, and How These Names Relate to God's Character and Essence

| Psalm 95:3b | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek] | <i>king, ruler, prince</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #4428 BDB #572 |

Psalm 95:3b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced <i>gaw-DOHL</i>] | <i>large, great or mighty [in power, nobility, wealth; in number, or magnitude and extent], loud, older, important, distinguished; vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing</i> | masculine singular adjective | Strong's #1419 BDB #152 |
| ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>ǵahl</i>] | <i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i> | preposition of proximity | Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752 |
| kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>] | with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i> | masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun | Strong's #3605 BDB #481 |
| ʿĕlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>] | <i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i> | masculine plural noun | Strong's #430 BDB #43 |

Context inevitably tells us whether this is the God, the Creator of the Universe, or foreign gods, which are the result of fertile imagination at best and representative of demons at worst. They are distinguished in a variety of ways (1) there will be the word *other* associated with the Hebrew word (Ex. 20:3 23:13 Joshua 24:2); (2) there will be a modifying word to indicate that *gods* is different from the God (Ex. 18:11); (3) the word *gods* is specifically differentiated from Y^ehowah in the immediate context (Ex. 22:19); (4) God would be associated with a singular verb (Deut. 4:34) and gods with plural verbs (Ex. 32:1, 23); (5) or gods will be modified by *foreign* or *of the Gentiles* (Gen. 35:2, 4 Deut. 31:16 2Kings 18:33).

The phrase *above all gods* is also found in Psalm 96:4.

Translation: ...and [He is] a great King over all gods,... We find similar phrasing and sentiment throughout Scripture: *Great is Y^ehowah and highly praised; and His greatness is unsearchable* (Psalm 145:3). We find very similar phrasing in Psalm 135:5: *For I know that Y^ehowah is great, and that our Y^ehowah is above all gods.* Psalm 96:4: *For great is Y^ehowah and greatly to be praised. He is to be feared above all gods.* Palm 97:9: *For You are Y^ehowah, Most High, over all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods.* This concept of *other gods* may confuse some people, but there is nothing to it. We know that there is no other God but God: “*Thus proclaims Y^ehowah, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, Y^ehowah of the armies, ‘I am the first and I am the last; there is no God besides Me...Is there any God besides Me or is there any other Rock? I know of none’*” (Isa. 44:6, 8b). “*I am Y^ehowah, and there is no other; besides Me, there is no God...There is no one besides Me; I am Y^ehowah, and there is no other...And there is no other God besides Me. A righteous God and a Savior, there is none except Me*” (Isa. 45:5a, 6b, 21b). However, nations had their own particular deities to whom they prayed and whom they attempted to appease. These deities were figments of their imagination, with no foundation in reality except that behind each national deity would be a demon or a legion of demons, who would accept this praise and their acts of appeasement. In this way, God is above these other deities; they are created beings who chose to go against God.

Paul explained it to us in 1Cor. 8:5–6: *For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords; yet, for us, there is one God, the Father, from Whom are all things, and we [exist] for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we {exist} through Him.*

The NIV Study Bible explains it: *Why Israel is to praise the Lord—because he is above all gods, and there is no corner of the universe that is not in his hand. The ancient pagan world had different gods for different peoples, different geographical areas, different cosmic regions (heaven, earth, netherworld) and different aspects of life (e.g., war, fertility, crafts).*¹⁰

We find this same theme in Ex. 18:11 Psalm 86:8–10 96:4 97:9 135:5 145:3 Isa. 44:8 Jer. 10:6–7, 10–16.

Barnes writes: *This does not mean that he is a great ruler of all other gods, as if they had a real existence, but that he is king or ruler far above all that were worshipped as gods, or to whom homage was paid. Whoever, or whatever was worshipped as God, Jehovah was supreme over all things. He occupied the throne; and all others must be beneath him, and under his dominion. If the sun, the moon, or the stars were worshipped,—if the mountains or the rivers,—if angels good or bad,—yet Jehovah was above all these. If imaginary beings were worshipped, yet Jehovah in his perfections was exalted far above all that was ascribed to them; for He was the true God, and the Ruler of the universe, while they were beings of the imagination only.*¹¹ God is exalted above all other gods here as the King over all in this verse, as the Creator of all things in vv. 4–6 and as the Shepherd of His people in v. 7.

Spurgeon writes: *No doubt the surrounding nations imagined Jehovah to be a merely local deity, the god of a small nation, and therefore one of the inferior deities; the Psalmist utterly repudiates such an idea. Idolaters tolerated gods many and lords many, giving to each a certain measure of respect; the monotheism of the Jews was not content with this concession, it rightly claimed for Jehovah the chief place, and the supreme power. He is great, for he is all in all; he is a great King above all other powers and dignitaries, whether angels or princes, for they owe their existence to him; as for the idol gods, they are not worthy to be mentioned. This verse and the following supply some of the reasons for worship, drawn from the being, greatness, and sovereign dominion of the Lord.*¹²

I hope that you realize that we are blessed far beyond angels as we have chosen to go our own way, we have rebelled against God, and He redeemed us. We are saved through the cross. The Bible indicates no such reprieve for angelic beings.¹³ Those angelic beings who chose against God once will spend eternity apart from Him and apart from His gracious provision (just as those of us of humankind who spend our entire lives pushing God away, will spend our eternity apart from Him as a matter of free will).

There is no verb in this verse, emphasizing its importance. We have two different words for God, apart from Yehowah, in this verse. The first is the singular ʾēl and the second is the very common ʾēlōhîm. As has been already referenced, I have covered the **Old Testament Names for God** as a doctrine. However, just in case you do not check that out, let me include a couple of basic charts from that doctrine:

Let me boil this down, naming the primary names for God:

| A Chart of the Names of God | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Name | Short Explanation |
| Elohim (God, gods) | A plural noun, mostly used with singular verbs, emphasizing the Trinity, but the unity of action of the Trinity. |

¹⁰ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 880.

¹¹ *Barnes' Notes*, Vol. IV, book 3, p. 37.

¹² Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 95:3.

¹³ This topic was one of much discussion at <http://forums.delphiforums.com/bdsg/messages> and, on at least one occasion in the basic series, R. B. Thieme Jr. made a brief statement about the angels having some means of salvation. I don't know if he recanted this position later or what, but I don't believe that there is a way of escape for fallen angels.

| A Chart of the Names of God | |
|---|--|
| Name | Short Explanation |
| YHWH, Y^ehowah, Jehovah (LORD) | This is a specific reference to a member of the Godhead. Most of the time, in the Old Testament, this refers to Jesus Christ. This may be taken as a proper noun. |
| EI (God) | A singular form of Elohim. This may be taken more as a title than as a proper noun. |
| Adonai (Lord, lord) | Most of the time when we find this noun, it is in the plural form (there is a great deal of explanation associated with this previously given). Since this name is often <i>spoken</i> instead of <i>Jehovah</i> , we may take this as a very personal title referring to God. |

This particular chart is original, but no doubt based upon the teaching I received at Berachah Church.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

This was taken from a website where the first paragraph reads: *Yeshua is the given Hebrew name of Jesus of Nazareth, the one and only Messiah, and creator and redeemer of the whole world. Yeshua is the name of G-d come in the flesh. Yeshua is the name that He was known by all the apostles and first century saints. Every time you see the word salvation in the scriptures it is Yeshua. There are 2 situations in which you should KNOW to use His real given Hebrew name. #1 Whenever speaking of Messiah to a Jew. #2 Whenever you are in spiritual warfare to overcome demonic principalities.*¹⁴

| The Names of God and the Meanings of these Names | |
|--|--|
| Name | Meaning |
| Elohim | God - The One and Only True God |
| Yahweh | LORD - He that is who He is, The eternal I AM |
| Adonai | Lord - Master |
| EI Shaddai | God Almighty - The All-sufficient One |
| EI Elyon | Most High - Possessor of heaven and earth |
| EI Olam | Everlasting God - God over eternal things; the Everlasting God |
| EI Gibbor | Mighty God - The Only All Powerful God |
| Yahweh Jireh | The LORD will provide |
| Jehovah Mekoddishkem | The Lord Who Sanctifies You |
| Jehovah-Raah | The Lord My Shepherd |
| Yahweh Rapha | The LORD who heals |
| Yahweh Nissi | The LORD is my banner, The LORD is my victory |
| Yahweh Shalom | The LORD our peace, The LORD gives peace |
| Yahweh Tsidkenu | The LORD Our Righteousness |
| Yahweh Shammah | The LORD is present, the Lord Who is There |

¹⁴ From <http://www.dccsa.com/greatjoy/namesof.htm>

The Names of God and the Meanings of these Names

| Name | Meaning |
|--|---|
| Yahweh Sabaoth | The LORD of Hosts, LORD Almighty, King of Glory; the Lord of the Armies |
| These are all taken from: http://www.dccsa.com/greatjoy/namesof.htm Some came from: http://www.blueletterbible.org/study/misc/name_god.html | |

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

**That in His hand depths of earth
and summits of mountains to Him.**

Psalm ...in Whose hand [are] the depths of the earth;
95:4 even mountain peaks [belong] to Him.

**He has authority over the depths of the earth;
and even the great mountain peaks belong to Him.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Latin Vulgate | For in his hand are all the ends of the earth: and the heights of the mountains are his. |
| Masoretic Text | That in His hand depths of earth and summits of mountains to Him. |
| Peshitta Septuagint | In His hand are the foundations of the earth; the strength of the hills is His also. For the ends of the earth are in his hands; and the heights of the mountains are his. |
| Significant differences: | Although both the Greek and Latin speak of the <i>ends [boundaries] of the earth</i> , the Hebrew word is only found here, and therefore, may have been difficult for them to translate. See the Hebrew exegesis. |

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|--|---|
| CEV | He holds the deepest part of the earth in his hands, and the mountain peaks belong to him. |
| Good News Bible (TEV) New Century Version | He rules over the whole earth, from the deepest caves to the highest hills. The deepest places on earth are his, and the highest mountains belong to him. |
| New Living Translation | He holds in his hands the depths of the earth and the mightiest mountains. |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| HCSB NIRV | The depths of the earth are in His hand, and the mountain peaks are His. He owns the deepest parts of the earth. The mountain peaks belong to him. |
| <i>The Scriptures</i> 1998 | In whose hand are the depths of the earth; The mountain peaks are His also. |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| <i>The Amplified Bible</i> | In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the heights and strength of the hills are His also. |
|----------------------------|---|

- Updated *Emphasized Bible* In Whose hand are the hidden recesses [or, distant parts] of the earth, and the peaks of the mountains are His.

- King James 2000 Version In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.
LTHB The deep places of the earth are in His hand; the summits of the mountains also are His.

- WEB In his hand are the deep places of the earth. The heights of the mountains are also his.

- Young's Literal Translation* In whose hand are the deep places of earth, And the strong places of hills are His.

What is the gist of this verse? God possesses, controls and oversees everything from the depths of the ocean to the heights of the mountains.

We continue with reasons why we ought sing with joy to God and to come to Him with thanksgiving.

| Psalm 95:4a | | | |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| ʾăsher (אוֹשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER] | <i>that, which, when, who, whom</i> | relative pronoun | Strong's #834 BDB #81 |
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd] | generally translated <i>hand</i> | feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #3027 BDB #388 |
| This combination of the bēyth preposition and <i>hand</i> literally means <i>in [the] hand of</i> ; and can be rendered <i>in the power of; by the power of; with; through, by, by means of; before, in the sight of</i> . | | | |
| mech ^o qâr (מַעְקָר) [pronounced mehkh ^o -KAWR] | <i>range, space, field; a recess</i> | masculine plural construct | Strong's #4278 BDB #350 |
| It is found only here in the Hebrew Bible. It is rendered <i>hidden resources</i> (Rotherham), <i>range (as a place to be explored)</i> (BDB), <i>depths</i> (NASB, NIV, NRSV and Owens), <i>deep places</i> (<i>The Amplified Bible</i> and Young). | | | |
| ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets] | <i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i> | feminine singular noun; pausal form | Strong's #776 BDB #75 |

Translation: In Whose hand [are] the depths of the earth;... The word *depths* is mech^oqâr and it is found only here in the Hebrew Bible. It is rendered variously as *hidden resources* (Rotherham), *range (as a place to be explored)* (BDB), *depths* (NASB, NIV, NRSV and Owens), *deep places* (*The Amplified Bible* and Young). There is the very similar word châqar (חָקַר) [pronounced khaw-KAHR], which means *to search* (Strong's #2713 BDB #350) and its noun cognate chêqer (חֵקֵר) [pronounced KHAY-ker], which is *the thing searched out or searched for*. Strong's #2714 BDB #350. Barnes points out that the searching implied is done by digging or boring into the earth; the portion of the earth which lies outside of man's ordinary observation.¹⁵ Since mech^oqâr

¹⁵ Barnes' Notes, Vol. IV, book 3, p. 37.

is related to the meaning, *to search out*; it is reasonable that the Greek or Latin would render this *the ends of the earth*.

We may contrast this phrase with the one which follows, which helps to explain where we get the meaning *depths*.

The NET Bible tells us that *the phrase "in his hand" means within the sphere of his authority.*¹⁶ The idea which the psalmist is putting forth is, *all of the earth is under the authority of Jehovah Elohim, from the greatest depths to the highest mountains.*

| Psalm 95:4b | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| tôw'âphâh (תֹּפְתָהּ) [pronounced <i>toh-ğaw-FAW</i>] | <i>eminence, lofty horns, summit, eminence (of towering horns, peaks, silver)</i> | feminine plural construct | Strong's #8443 BDB #419 |
| har (הַר) [pronounced <i>har</i>] | <i>mountains, hills</i> | masculine plural noun | Strong's #2022 (and #2042) BDB #249 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |

Translation: ...even mountain peaks [belong] to Him. By including the depths and the heights of the mountain, the psalmist takes in all of that which is the earth. *Whatever Y^ehowah pleases, He does, in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all the depths* (Psalm 135:6). By virtue of being the Creator of these things, God has dominion over them.

Forgive me here, but I want to go on a tangent with respect to this. If all the earth is God's, then what right do we have to claiming ownership over this or that plot of ground? Aren't we but sojourners on this earth, and should we not treat the land more like the Indians? Should we not revere it and let it be free of our fences and our mortgages? God told Adam that he would make his way in this world by the sweat of his brow; and, although there are different interpretations given to that, it is clear that both Cain and Abel, Adam's sons, learned about hunting animals and growing crops. Now, when we come to Israel, God will specifically assign plots of land to this or that tribe, which land will ber further broken up between this or that family—what is important is, *they owned this land*. The Mosaic Law was very specific on property rights and God's design for these rights (which, let me make this clear, were made for Israel specifically). If there is private ownership of the land under God's Law which He gave to Moses, then the idea of the state owning all of the land is wrong. Communism is not any different than the serf system of old, when either the state or certain large landowners owned all of the land, and serfs were allowed to farm this land, but not to own it. Another corruption of this concept is high taxes on property. The government should not be taxing excessively those who own property (or for anything else).

¹⁶ *The Net Bible*®; © 1996-2006 by Biblical Studies Press (BSP); taken from e-Sword; also found at <http://www.bible.org/netbible/index.htm>, Psalm 95:4.

**That to Him the sea
and He made him
and dry land His hands form.**

Psalm
95:5

**The sea [is] His, He made it;
and His hands formed dry land.**

**The sea, which He made, is His;
and He formed dry land with His own hands.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Masoretic Text | That to Him the sea and He made him and dry land His hands form. |
| Septuagint | For the sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. |
| Significant differences: | None. |

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|---|--|
| CEV | The ocean is the Lord's because he made it, and with his own hands he formed the dry land. |
| Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i> | He rules over the sea, which he made; the land also, which he himself formed. He made Ocean--he owns it! His hands sculpted Earth!. |
| New American Bible | The sea and dry land belong to God, who made them, formed them by hand. |
| New Century Version | The sea is his because he made it, and he created the land with his own hands. |
| New Living Translation | The sea belongs to him, for he made it. His hands formed the dry land, too. |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| JPS (Tanakh) | His is the sea, He made it; and the land, which His hands fashioned. |
| NET Bible® | The sea is his, because he made it. Also, his hands made the dry land. |
| NIRV | The ocean is his, because he made it. He formed the dry land with his hands. |
| <i>The Scriptures</i> 1998 | His is the sea, for He made it; And His hands formed the dry land. |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| MKJV | The sea <i>is</i> His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. |
| <i>Young's Literal Translation</i> | Whose is the sea, and He made it, And His hands formed the dry land. |

What is the gist of this verse? The sea is also God's, along with the dry land, which He formed with His own hands.

Psalm 95:5a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| ʾāsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER] | <i>that, which, when, who, whom</i> | relative pronoun | Strong's #834 BDB #81 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced l°] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i> | directional/relational preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| Additional meanings of the lâmed preposition: <i>with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to.</i> | | | |
| yâm (יָם) [pronounced yawm] | <i>sea, lake, river, seaward, west, westward</i> | masculine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #3220 BDB #410 |

Translation: [The sea \[is\] His...](#) As is the theme throughout Scripture, the God of Israel is the God of the Earth. At no time does the Bible ever back off from that.

Our earth is filled with a number of things which insure our continued life on this planet. One of those things is the ocean and the percentage of the earth which is covered by the ocean. This maintains moderate temperatures and allows for the water cycle, which we depend upon. All of this was put into place by God.

Psalm 95:5b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, ו) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced hoo] | <i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun | Strong's #1931 BDB #214 |
| ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH] | <i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #6213 BDB #793 |

Translation: [...He made it;](#)... The sea and all is in it is God's because He made the sea. God had in His mind what environment would be ideal for life, and part of that was the ocean.

It might be nice to gather up some of the passages which deal with God's relation to the seas:

| God and the Seas | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Passage | Reading |
| Gen. 1:9–10 | And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land, Earth. And He called the gathering together of the waters, Seas. And God saw that it was good. |

| God and the Seas | |
|----------------------|---|
| Passage | Reading |
| Job 38:8–11 | Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it broke forth as it came from the womb? When I made the clouds its robe, and darkness its navel-band, and set My limit on it, and set bars and doors, and I said [to the seas], “You shall come to here, but no further; and here your proud waves shall stop.” |
| Psalms 33:7 | He gathered the waters of the sea like a heap, setting the depths in storehouses. |
| Prov. 8:27–29 | When He [God] prepared the heavens, I [wisdom] was there; when He set a circle upon the face of the deep; when He set the clouds above; when He made the strong fountains of the deep; when He gave to the sea its limit that the waters should not pass His command; when He appointed the foundations of the earth. |
| Jer. 5:22 | Do you not fear Me? says Jehovah. Will you not tremble at My presence, I who have placed the sand for the boundary of the sea by a never-ending decree, so that it cannot pass it? And though they toss themselves, yet they cannot prevail; though its waves roar, yet they cannot pass over it? |
| Matt. 8:23–27 | And He entering into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And behold, a great tempest arose in the sea, so much so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. And His disciples came to Him and awakened Him, saying, Lord, save us! We perish! And He said to them, Why are you afraid, little-faiths? Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marveled, saying, What kind of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him! |

As we would expect, the Lord Jesus Christ has power over the seas and the winds which He created.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Psalm 95:5c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| yabbesheth (תְּשֻׁבַי) [pronounced <i>yahb-BEH-sheth</i>] | <i>dry land, dry ground</i> | feminine singular noun | Strong's #3006 BDB #387 |
| yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>] | <i>hand</i> | feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #3027 BDB #388 |
| yâtsar (רָצַי) [pronounced <i>yaw-TSAR</i>] | <i>to form, to mold, to sculpt, to fashion; to destine, to predestine, to foreordain; to form in the mind, to devise, to plan</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect; pausal form | Strong's #3335 BDB #427 |

Translation: ...and His hands formed dry land. The psalmist points out that everything belongs to God; He has complete rights of ownership, as He made it and formed it. How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob

and whose hope is in Y^ehowah his God, Who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever (Psalm 146:5–6; also see Jonah 1:9).

Spurgeon comments: *“And his hands formed the dry land.” Whether fertile field or sandy waste, he made all that men call terra firma, lifting it from the floods and fencing it from the overflowing waters. “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.” He bade the isles upraise their heads, he leveled the vast plains, unprepared the table-lands, cast up the undulating hills, and piled the massive Alps. As the potter molds his clay, so did Jehovah with his hands fashion the habitable parts of the earth.*¹⁷

**Come, let us bow down and let us bend the knee;
let us kneel down to faces of Y^ehowah our Maker,...**

Psalm
95:6

**Come, let us prostrate ourselves and let us bow down;
let us kneel down before Y^ehowah our Maker,...**

**Come, let us prostrate ourselves and let us bow down;
let us kneel down before Jehovah our Maker,...**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Masoretic Text | Come, let us bow down and let us bend the knee; let us kneel down to faces of Y ^e howah our Maker. |
| Septuagint | Come, let us worship and fall down before him; and <u>weep</u> before the Lord our Maker. |

Significant differences: Three very similar verbs are found in the Hebrew; the 3rd verb in the Greek is not really a synonym. Perhaps there just were not enough Greek verbs to match what we find in the Hebrew? The Latin and Syriac are in agreement with the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|---|--|
| CEV | Bow down and worship the LORD our Creator! |
| Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i> | Come, let us bow down and worship him; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! So come, let us worship: bow before him, on your knees before GOD, who made us! |
| New Jerusalem Bible | Come, let us bow low and do reverence; kneel before Yahweh who made us! |
| New Life Version | Come, let us bow down in worship. Let us get down on our knees before the Lord Who made us. |
| Revised English Bible | Enter in! Let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD who made us,... |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Bible in Basic English | O come, let us give worship, falling down on our knees before the Lord our Maker. |
| Complete Apostles' Bible | Come, let us worship and fall down before Him, and weep before the Lord that made us. |
| Easy English (Churchyard) | Come, we will fall down on our knees in front of him. We will stay on our knees in front of the *LORD that made us. |
| NIRV | Come, let us bow down and worship him. |

¹⁷ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 95:5.

The Scriptures 1998 Let us fall on our knees in front of the Lord our Maker.
 Come, let us bow down and bend low, Let us kneel before יהוה our Maker.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker [in reverent praise and supplication].
A Voice in the Wilderness Oh come, let us prostrate ourselves and bow down; let us kneel before Jehovah our Maker.
 WEB Oh come, let's worship and bow down. Let's kneel before Yahweh, our Maker,...
 Young's Updated LT Come in, we bow ourselves, and we bend, We kneel before Jehovah our Maker;...

What is the gist of this verse? The psalmist calls upon the hearer to worship and to bow down before Jehovah God.

| Psalm 95:6a | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh] | <i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i> | 2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative | Strong's #935 BDB #97 |
| shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW] | <i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i> | 1 st person plural, Hithpael imperfect | Strong's #7812 BDB #1005 |
| Although Owen does not say that this verb has a voluntative hê affixed to it, it does end with a hê. | | | |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| kâra' (כָּרָה) [pronounced kaw-RAHG] | <i>to bend the knees, to bow down, to bend down before [usually used for doing obeisance to a king]; to crouch [down]; by implication: to fall, to sink</i> | 1 st person plural, Qal imperfect; with the voluntative hê | Strong's #3766 BDB #502 |

Translation: *Come, let us prostrate ourselves and let us bow down;...* The first verb calls for the listener *to come, to come in, to enter in*. As an imperative, it simple means *come*.

Barnes: *This is an earnest exhortation to come and worship. It is not a particle merely calling attention to a subject, but it is an exhortation to approach—to enter—to engage in a thing.*¹⁸ This is not the same verb as is found in v. 1.

This parallels the first two verses of our Psalm, which read: *O come, let us sing to Jehovah; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His face with praise; let us shout for joy to Him with songs.* The prophet Hosea asks the same thing of us: *Come and let us return to Jehovah. For He has torn, and He will heal us. He has stricken, and He will bind us up. After two days He will bring us to life. In the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live before Him* (Hosea 6:1–2). And in the end times, our witness is: *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And the one hearing, let him say, Come! And the one thirsting, let him come; and the one desiring, let him take of the water of life freely* (Rev. 22:17).

¹⁸ *Barnes' Notes*, Vol. IV, book 3, p. 38.

We have three verbs in this verse describing physical positions, all of which refer to the worship of God. The first is *shâchach*, which means *to bow, to bow down*. We find the same verb in Gen. 18:2, which reads: *And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him. And when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed toward the ground.*

This verb is found in the Hithpael (which is the reflexive intensive) imperfect, and I have interpreted the reflexive intensive stem to involve personal motivation. It just means that they are *make themselves bow low*; but that involve motivation, grace-orientation, authority-orientation and doctrine. In this context, this means likely to prostrates oneself completely on the ground, as was the commons mode of worship.

The next verb of worship is the Qal imperfect voluntative of *kâra* and it means *to bow down, to bend low*. We find this same verb used 3 times in Judges 5:27: *Between her feet he bowed; he fell; he lay down. Between her feet he bowed; he fell! Where he bowed, there he fell down ruined.* This describes Sisera who hides in the tent of Jael, and when he falls asleep, she drives a tent peg through his head, causing him to apparently rise up at first, but then to *fall* at her feet.

Gill relates this to our Lord in the New Testament: *Oh, come, let us bow down and worship before Him; Before him who is the Rock of our salvation, the great God and great King, the Creator of the ends of the earth, the proper object of all religious worship and adoration: Christ is to be worshipped with every part of external worship under the New Testament dispensation; psalms and songs of praise are to be sung unto him; prayer is to be made unto him; the Gospel is to be preached, and ordinances to be administered, in his name; and likewise with all internal worship, in the exercise of every grace on him, as faith, hope, and love.*¹⁹ *Worshiping Jesus Christ, by the way, is one of the many great evidences of His Deity.*

Psalm 95:6b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|
| bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK^e</i>] | <i>to bless; to kneel down, to bend there knees, and therefore to invoke God, to ask for a blessing, to bless</i> | 1 st person plural, Qal imperfect; with the voluntative <i>hê</i> | Strong's #1288 BDB #138 |
| lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>] | <i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i> | directional/relational preposition | No Strong's # BDB #510 |
| pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>] | <i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i> | masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular) | Strong's #6440 BDB #815 |
| <p>Together, they mean <i>upon the face of, before, before the face of, in the presence of, in the sight of, in front of</i>. When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in the judgment of</i>. This can also mean <i>forwards; the front part</i> [or, the edge of a sword]. <i>L^epânîym</i> (לְפָנַיִם) can take on a temporal sense as well: <i>before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times</i>.</p> | | | |
| YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>] | transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i> | proper noun | Strong's #3068 BDB #217 |

¹⁹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:6.

Psalm 95:6b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| ʿâsâh (אָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>] | <i>a doer, a maker, one who constructs [fashions, preparers]</i> | masculine singular, Qal active participle; with the 1 st person plural suffix | Strong's #6213 BDB #793 |

Translation: ...let us kneel down before Y^ehowah our Maker. The third verb is the Qal imperfect voluntative of bârak^e, which means *to kneel down, to kneel before*; and also *to bless, to prosper*. I have had problems with the idea of us *blessing* God for a long time. It just does not make a lot of sense to me. I am thinking that in this context, and in similar contexts, when we *bless* God or are *to offer blessing before God*, that perhaps this is a metonymy for *offering thankfulness or gratitude for the blessings given us; or to do that which causes God to be happy*. The former connotation would be in phrasings such as this (*before the face of God*) and the latter when God is simply the direct object of the verb. As we have seen, *face*, in the Hebrew, is always in the plural. There is nothing theologically significant to it being in the plural.

To have a better understanding of the verb bârak^e, you may want to examine the **Doctrine of Bârak^e**, the abbreviated version of which is found below:

It may be helpful to also list this as a doctrine, so that I can place these conclusions in with any chapter which I have exegeted. What is found below is identical to the conclusions above.

The Short Doctrine of Bârak^e

- I. Some general comments:
 1. Pronunciation and spelling: bârak^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced *baw-RAHK^e*]. Strong's #1288 BDB #138.
 2. First of all, the basic meaning of bârak^e is *to kneel before; to bless*.
 3. The use of bârak^e seems to be, in one sense, an indication that one believes in Jesus Christ. It is as if the person is saying, *I am a believer in Jesus Christ*; but, in the Old Testament, this would mean *I am a believer in Jehovah Elohim, the God of the Jews*. The person is expressing praise and adoration toward God, or he is asking for God to bless the one to whom he is speaking, but the implication appears to be that this person is a believer in Jehovah Elohim, and therefore, in a sense, making a public declaration of faith.
- II. Qal (common) Stem:
 1. *To bend to knee; to bless*
 2. When addressed toward God, *to celebrate, to praise, to adore; to bend the knee to* (Gen. 9:26).
 - 1) This is found in the Qal passive participle, used in this way because God has answered prayer (Gen. 24:27).
 3. The Qal passive participle is used in the phrase *blessed of Jehovah* (in Gen. 24:31) to indicate that a person is a believer in Jehovah Elohim, witnessed to because Jehovah has blessed him. At the very least, this may be understood that Jehovah has blessed him with salvation.
 4. We find the Qal passive participle used with God blessing man, we understand this to mean *to bless, to be made prosperous, to be made to have many children*. Gen. 26:29.
 5. The use of the word bârak^e could indicate that a person was a believer in Jehovah Elohim. Ex. 18:10–13.
- III. Piel (intensive) Stem:
 1. *To bless* [in the sense of giving creatures the ability and the desire to procreate in abundance] (Gen. 1:22, 28 22:17).
 2. *To bless* [in the sense of man using all his God-given resources to subdue the earth; more generally, to make grand use of God's provisions] (Gen. 1:28).

The Short Doctrine of Bârak^e

3. *To make abundant, to make prosperous*, (both from Gesenius); and let me suggest *to provide for in great abundance* (Gen. 1:28 5:2 17:20 22:17 24:1, 31, 35 25:11).
4. *To celebrate* [i.e., the Sabbath] (Gen. 2:3).
5. *To bless; to treat with respect; to give due deference* (Gen. 12:3 with reference to Gentiles *blessing* Jews). This set of meanings can be reasonably derived from the fundamental meaning *to bend the knee to*; and to extrapolate from this, Gentiles relating to Jews in the sense of *blessing* them.
6. The Piel is used of man blessing God in the sense that it means *to celebrate, to praise, to adore; to bend the knee to* (Gen. 24:48).
7. One person blessing another person means *to wish a person blessing, happiness, prosperity, and children*. See Gen. 24:60. 27:23 however, there is more to this word than one person asking nice things to happen to another. Gen. 27 contains a story about Isaac blessing Jacob (who pretended to be Esau in order to get this blessing). That deceit would be used to get blessing, indicates that Jacob receiving the blessing of Isaac is quite important. Gen. 27:1–29. So, there is more to this than simply *to bless; to wish for blessings for someone; to ask God to give special blessings and abundance to another*. This story seems to carry with it some sort of exclusivity as well as the expectation of blessing being bestowed. *To invoke or enjoin God for blessings [prosperity, happiness] for another*.
8. Bârak^e is used as a greeting and as a goodbye. Ruth 2:4 Gen. 47:10
9. There are problem verses: 1Kings 21:10, 13 Job 1:5, 11 2:5 Psalm 10:3 where bârak^e (found in the Piel) is translated by some as *curse*. Others suggest that the common meanings may be applied. Since this word is used in a farewell (Gen. 47:7, 10; and how many people, when they say good bye to you, say, “God bless”), it is suggested that it means *to bid farewell to, to greet*. Barnes makes this suggestion, affirming that bârak^e may be rendered *to curse: Perhaps the best explanation of the bad sense of the original word is to be found in the practice of blessing by way of salutation, not only on meeting, but also on taking leave (Gen. 47:7, 10). From the latter custom the word came to mean “bidding farewell to,” and so “renouncing,” “casting off,” “cursing.”*¹ In the verses named, it is quite difficult to render bârak^e to mean *bless* when it clearly appears to mean *curse, blaspheme* in 1Kings 21:10, 13.

IV. Niphal (passive) Stem:

1. *To be blessed, to receive blessing; to be made prosperous; to be made abundant* (Gen. 12:2).

V. Hithpael (intensive reflexive; reflexive of the Piel) Stem:

1. *To be blessed, to receive blessing; to be made prosperous; to be made abundant*. Gen. 26:4, 12.

VI. The Pual uses are not found in the book of Genesis. The Pual is the passive stem of the Piel, making it the passive, intensive stem.

1. *To receive blessing; to receive divine favor; to be given prosperity and/or abundance*. See Num. 22:6.
2. This also appears to refer to *blessing, prosperity and abundance from God*. Deut. 33:13.
 - 1) This can be used of God by man, and therefore, it means God should *receive the bowing of the knees, the worship, and the obeisance* from man. Job 1:21.

¹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Kings 21:10.

Chapter Outline

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Therefore, when addressed to God, bârak^e means *to celebrate, to praise, to adore; to bend the knee to* (Gen. 9:26). In our context, *to celebrate before God* or *to bend the knee before God* are reasonable understandings of this verb.

All of these verbs begin with a nun (נ) and end with a hê (ה), which provides both a parallelism and is also a part of the poetry found here.

Clarke Summarizes the Acts of Worship in Psalm 95:6

1. Let us worship, הוֹתַחֲשֵׁנוּ nistachaveh, let us prostrate ourselves; the highest act of adoration by which the supremacy of God is acknowledged.
2. Let us bow down, הִעֲרַכְנוּ nichraah, let us crouch or cower down, bending the legs under, as a dog in the presence of his master, which solicitously waits to receive his commands.
3. Let us kneel, הִכְרַבְנוּ nibrachah, let us put our knees to the ground, and thus put ourselves in the posture of those who supplicate.

And let us consider that all this should be done in the presence of Him who is Jehovah our Creator.

From Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:6.

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The psalms are filled with calls to worship. **Worship Y^ehowah in the splendor of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth** (Psalm 96:8). **Exalt Y^ehowah our God and worship at His footstool. He is holy...exalt Y^ehowah our God and worship at His holy hill, for holy is Y^ehowah our God** (Psalm 99:6). **I am God, and there is no other. By Myself I have sworn; Truth has gone from My mouth, a word that will not be revoked: Every knee will bow to Me, every tongue will swear allegiance** (Isa. 45:22b–23 Rom. 14:11).. Since Jesus Christ is God, we are called to sorship Him in the New Testament: **Therefore, God also highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father** (Philip. 2:9–11).

Barnes comments were quite interesting at this point. *All the expressions here employed denote a posture of profound reverence in worship, and the passage is a standing rebuke to all irreverent postures in prayer; of such habits as often prevail in public worship where no change of posture is made in prayer, and where a congregation irreverently sit in the act of professedly worshipping god. Men show to their fellow men the respect indicated by rising up before them:—much more should they show respect to God—respect in a posture which will indicate profound reverence, and a deep sense of his presence and majesty. Reverently kneeling or standing will indicate this; sitting does not.*²⁰ I include that, not because I subscribe to this idea, but so that you see what others have interpreted this passage as saying. Worship originates with authority orientation in our souls and we *kneel*, as it were, in our souls. The posture our body takes depends a great deal upon upbringing and personal conviction. I pray often while driving. For me, it is an ideal time to pray, as I have ten to sixty minutes of time otherwise wasted, other than going from point A to point B. My own view, is that the reverence in the heart may or may not result in a change of physical position. The Hebrews were much more physically demonstrative than I am and their worship and their calls to worship reveal that.

Maker is the Qal active participle of ʿâsâh, which means *to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form*. Thieme renders this *our continuing manufacturer*. The action is not necessarily continuous. The Qal active participle is often used as a noun, describing a person by what he does or has done. **In that day, man will have regard for his Maker and his eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel** (Isa. 17:7). In speaking to Zion, God said, **“For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is Y^ehowah of armies; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth.”** (Isa. 54:5). But Israel will loose sight of Who her Maker is: **For Israel has forgotten his Maker and built palaces; and Judah has multiplied fortified cities. However, I will send a fire on its cities that it may consume its palatial dwellings** (Hosea 8:14).

²⁰ Barnes' Notes, Vol. IV, book 3, p. 38.

I have decided to split v. 7 into two parts. It would have been more correct to place v. 7a at the end of v. 6 and v. 7b with v. 8. After several goes at this section, I can see no other way to play it.

...for He [is] our Elohim, and we [are] people of His pasture and sheep of His hand. Psalm 95:7a **...for He [is] our Elohim and we [are] the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.**

...for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text For He [is] our Elohim, and we [are] people of His pasture and sheep of His hand.
Septuagint For He is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

Significant differences: None, apart from the slight difference in verse division. Both the Latin and Greek Bibles place v. 7b with v. 8 (as do many English Bibles).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV The LORD is our God, and we are his people, the sheep he takes care of in his own pasture.
Good News Bible (TEV) He is our God; we are the people he cares for, the flock for which he provides.
The Message Oh yes, he's our God, and we're the people he pastures, the flock he feeds.
New American Bible For this is our God,
whose people we are,
God's well-tended flock.
New Century Version ...because he is our God
and we are the people he takes care of,
the sheep that he tends.
New Jerusalem Bible For he is our God,
and we the people of his sheepfold,
the flock of his hand.
New Life Version For He is our God. And we are the people of His field, and the sheep of His hand.
New Living Translation ...for he is our God.
We are the people he watches over,
the flock under his care.
Revised English Bible for he is our God,
we the people he shepherds, the flock in his care.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English For he is our God; and we are the people to whom he gives food, and the sheep of his flock.
Easy English (Churchyard) (We will do this) because he is our God.
Also, we are the people that he feeds and keeps safe.
We are as animals and he is as the farmer (that feeds us)!
*God's Word*TM ...because he is our God and we are the people in his care, the flock that he leads.
If only you would listen to him today!
HCSB For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, the sheep under His care.
NET Bible[®] For he is our God;

NIRV
 we are the people of his pasture,
 the sheep he owns. [Hebrew: "of his hand."
 He is our God.
 We are the sheep belonging to his flock.
 We are the people he takes good care of.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated *Emphasized Bible* For He is our God,
 and we are the people of His pasture and the flock of His hand [Ginsberg thinks, *the people of His hand, the flock of His pasture*; compare Psalm 79:13 100:3].
 WEB For he is our God. We are the people of his pasture, And the sheep in his care.
 Young's Updated LT ...for He is our God, and we the people of His pasture, And the flock of His hand.

What is the gist of this verse? The first part of this verse tells why we ought to kneel down before God: He is our God and we are the people of His pasture as well as the sheep in His hand.

| Psalm 95:7a | | | |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>] | <i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i> | explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition | Strong's #3588 BDB #471 |
| hûw' (אוה) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>] | <i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this</i> | 3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun | Strong's #1931 BDB #214 |
| ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>] | <i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i> | masculine plural noun with the 1 st person plural suffix | Strong's #430 BDB #43 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| ʾānāch ^e nûw (אֲנַחְנוּ) [pronounced <i>uh-NAHKH-noo</i>] | <i>we; (sometimes a verb is implied)</i> | 1 st person plural pronoun | Strong's #587 BDB #59 |
| ʿam (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>] | <i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i> | masculine singular construct; collective noun | Strong's #5971 BDB #766 |
| mar ^e ʿîyth (מִרְעֵיתָה) [pronounced <i>mahr-GEETH</i>] | <i>pasture; pasturing, shepherding; and the metonym, flock</i> | feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #4830 BDB #945 |
| w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |

Psalm 95:7a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------|
| tsô`n (צֹן) [pronounced tzohn] | <i>small cattle, sheep and goats, flock, flocks</i> | feminine singular collective noun; construct form | Strong's #6629 BDB #838 |
| yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd] | <i>hand</i> | feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #3027 BDB #388 |

The Chaldee, Syriac, Vulgate, and Ethiopic read, “We are His people, and the sheep of the pasture of his hand.”²¹ Although there are some differences, I don’t see them as being fundamental.

Translation: ...for He [is] our Elohim and we [are] the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. In v. 6, we were enjoined to worship God, and the first portion of this verse indicates why—He is our God and we are His people (in context, this was an Israelite speaking to other Israelites). Israel is called the *sheep of God’s pasture* in Psalm 100:3: **Know that Y’howah Himself is God; it is He who has made us and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture** (see also Psalm 74:1 Jer. 23:1).

Let’s look at a few Scriptures which deal with this concept:

God is our Shepherd; We are His Sheep

1. As sheep, it is our nature to go astray. **All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, each one to his own way; and Jehovah has laid on Him the iniquity of us all** (Isa. 53:6 1Peter 2:25). **This people goes astray in their hearts** (Psalm 95:10b paraphrased).
2. Because God is our Shepherd, we will not lack anything. Psalm 23:1: **Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not lack.**
3. God, as our Shepherd, sees to our basic needs. Psalm 23:2: **He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me to waters of rest.**
4. He restores, refreshes, and repairs our souls (Psalm 23:3a). We are born with a broken soul. We lack the human spirit, which is our ability to have a relationship with God. When we are out of fellowship, we name our sins and God *restores* our fellowship with Him. Bible doctrine in our soul refreshes our soul and gives us a proper outlook.
5. Psalm 23:3b: **He guides me in paths [wheel tracks] of righteousness for His name's sake.** As His sheep, He guides us into right actions.
6. We are God’s people and we are the sheep of His pasture. Psalm 79:13
7. We may call out to the Shepherd of Israel. Psalm 80:1
8. Psalm 100:3: **Know that Jehovah, He is God; He has made us, and not we ourselves, His people and the sheep of His pasture.** God made us as His people and as the sheep of His pasture.
9. Jehovah will feed and protect His sheep. Isa. 40:11
10. At some point, Israel will not longer be a prey to the other nations and they will live securely, because the Jews are His sheep. Ezek. 34:28–31
11. Psalm 95:7a: **He [is] our Elohim and we [are] the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.**
12. As the sheep of His hand, we cannot be lost and we cannot be taken from His hand.
13. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, will lay His life down for His sheep. John 10:11–13, 15, 27
14. As the Great Shepherd, Jesus knows those who are His; and we know His voice. John 10:14
15. Jesus will lead two great flocks of sheep—Israel and the Church—which will become one flock. John 10:16

²¹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:7.

God is our Shepherd; We are His Sheep

16. Because we are His sheep, no one will pluck us out of His hand. John 10:28b
17. Because we are His sheep, Jesus will give us eternal life. John 10:26a
18. God the Father has given Jesus the sheep; and no one can pluck these sheep from His Father's hand either. John 10:29
19. In Jesus' absence, and with Paul's departure, pastors are the shepherds of His flock. Acts 20:28
20. Although we are like sheep going astray, we will return to the shepherd of our souls. 1Peter 2:25

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The responsibility and grace given to these people is almost beyond imagination. The God of the universe chose them above all other peoples as His own. Those who subscribe to covenant theology—the concept that true Israel is composed of believers and that we, the church, are true Israel, negates most of the Old Testament. True Israel is composed of the believers who were descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and those who became Hebrew by a profession of faith in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And we are, in the Church Age, a spiritual Israel, so to speak, as we believe in the very same God, Jesus Christ, Y^ehowah of the Hebrews. However, we are an entirely different entity with a somewhat different relationship to one another and to God. Our responsibilities are somewhat different and God never confuses us with Israel. We are saved in exactly the same way as true Israel was saved—by believing in Jesus Christ—but we are a separate entity altogether. Otherwise, we should have had tabernacles pop up all over the civilized world at that time and the restriction of worship to one place would have seemed artificially restrictive. After all, we have churches all over the world, and churches which are essentially accurate in their basic doctrine and evangelism. If we have this sort of thing now, why was it not in existence then? The answer is explained quite simply by dispensations: God was operating through a different household at that time; He operated through the Israelites, who were mostly confined to one particular geographical area. Now, that the Israelites are scattered throughout the world, God no longer is working through them but He now works through us, the Church, which is found throughout the world. This is why those who desire God's truth do not go to a synagogue but they go to a church, as, ideally speaking, the church is now the custodian of God's Truth.

There are two related problems with covenant theology: (1) No matter what God says, not matter how clearly He states it, if you screw up things bad enough, God can take back what he has said. (2) If you expect for God to come through on His promises, you had damn well better keep up your half of the bargain, or you are going to find yourself up defecation creek without any means of steering or locomotion. When you run into someone who believes in covenant theology (and let's assume that they gave this some thought and study), you are looking at a legalist. Legalism believes that God's grace is not quite sufficient, that we need, in some way, kick in our 10%; and if Israel can lose all of the promises made of her, then do not think there is any such thing as eternal security. Furthermore, this calls into question God's omniscience. Did God not realize what a spectacular failure Israel would be, and therefore, have to suddenly spiritualize all of Israel's promises?

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The first 7 verses of this psalm is somewhat of a primer on praise for God.

Matthew Henry: How and Why God is Praised

I. How God is to be praised.

Matthew Henry: How and Why God is Praised

1. With holy joy and delight in him. The praising song must be a joyful noise (Psalm 95:1–2). Spiritual joy is the heart and soul of thankful praise. It is the will of God (such is the condescension of his grace) that when we give glory to Him as a being infinitely perfect and blessed we should, at the same time, rejoice in Him as our Father and King, and a God in covenant with us [that covenant being the Covenant in His Blood²²].
2. With humble reverence, and a holy awe of Him (Psalm 95:6: “Let us worship, and bow down, and kneel before him, as becomes those who know what an infinite distance there is between us and God, how much we are in danger of his wrath and in need of his mercy.”). It is our duty to glorify God with our bodies by the outward expressions of reverence, seriousness, and humility, in the duties of religious worship. However, the key is never our posture or movement, but what resides in our souls.
3. We must praise God with our voice; we must speak forth, sing forth, his praises out of the abundance of a heart filled with love, and joy, and thankfulness – **Sing to the Lord; make a noise, a joyful noise to Him.**
4. We must praise God in concert, in the solemn assemblies [this is the corporate witness]: “Come, let us sing; Come, let us worship and bow down and kneel before Jehovah our Maker.” Whenever we come into God’s presence we must come with thanksgiving that we are given so much grace. We must come before God’s presence, set ourselves before Him, and present ourselves to Him in the ordinances which He has appointed [in our age, this is chiefly the Lord’s Supper as a ritual and the teaching of Bible doctrine for the growth of our souls).

II. Why God is to be praised:

1. **Because he is a great God, and sovereign Lord of all** (Psalm 95:3). He is great, and therefore greatly to be praised. He is infinite and immense, and has all perfection in Himself.

(1.) He has great power: He is a great King above all gods, above all deputed deities, all magistrates (to whom He has said, **You are gods**—He manages them all, and serves His own purposes by them, and to Him they are all accountable), above all counterfeit deities, all pretenders, all usurpers; He can do that which none of them can do; He can, and will, famish and vanquish them all.

(2.) He has great possessions. This lower world is here particularly specified. We reckon those great men who have large territories, which they call their own against all the world, which yet are a very inconsiderable part of the universe: how great then is that God whose the whole earth is, and the fulness thereof, not only under whose feet it is, as he has an incontestable dominion over all the creatures and a propriety in them, but in whose hand it is, as he has the actual directing and disposing of all (Psalm 95:4: **In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is also His**); even the deep places of the earth, which are out of our sight, subterraneous springs and mines, are in his hand; and the height of the hills which are out of our reach, whatever grows or feeds upon them, is his also. Whatever strength is in any creature it is derived from God and employed for Him. Psalm 95:5: **The sea is His**, and all that is in it; it is His, for He made it, gathered its waters and fixed its shores; the dry land, though given to the children of men, is his too, for he still reserved the property to himself; it is His, for His hands formed it, when His word made the dry land appear. His being the Creator of all makes Him, without dispute, the Owner of all. This being a gospel psalm, we may very well suppose that it is the Lord Jesus whom we are here taught to praise. He is a great God; the mighty God is one of his titles, and God over all, blessed forever.

2. Because He is our God, not only has a dominion over us, as He has over all the creatures, but stands in special relation to us. Psalm 95:7: **For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for possession, so that you might speak of the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light** (1Peter 2:9).

²² The focus of R. B. Thieme III’s teaching at the end of February 2008 and early March of the same year.

Matthew Henry: How and Why God is Praised

(1.) He is our Creator, and the author of our being; **we must kneel before the Lord our Maker** (Psalm 95:6). Idolaters kneel before gods which they themselves made [which is a form of self-worship]; we kneel before a God Who made us and all the world and Who is therefore our rightful proprietor; for we are His, and not our own, **for we have been bought with a price.**

(2.) He is our Saviour, and the author of our blessedness. He is here called **the rock of our salvation** (Psalm 95:1), not only the founder, but the very foundation, of that work of wonder, upon Whom it all is built. **That rock is Christ;** to Him therefore we must sing our songs of praises, **to Him that sits upon the throne and to the Lamb.**

(3.) We are therefore His, under all possible obligations: **We are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.** We must praise him, not only because He made us, but because He preserves and maintains us, and our breath and ways are in His hand. This is even more true of His church and of Israel, as we are **the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand;** and therefore He demands our homage in a special manner. Christ is the great and good Shepherd of both the church and Israel. We, as Christians, are led by his hand into the green pastures, by him we are protected and well provided for, to his honour and service we are entirely devoted as a peculiar people, and therefore to him must be **glory in the churches (whether it be in the world or no) throughout all ages** (Eph. 3:21).

(4.) He is our Mediator, he is a great King above all gods; by him kings reign; and angels, principalities, and powers, are subject to him; by him, as the eternal Word, all things were made (John 1:3), and it was fit that He should be the restorer and reconciler of all who was the Creator of all (Col. 1:16, 20). To Him all power is given both in heaven and in earth, and into His hand all things are delivered. It is He that sets one foot on the sea and the other on the earth, as sovereign Lord of both (Rev. 10:2), and therefore to Him we must sing our songs of praise, and before Him we must worship and bow down.

Taken from Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:1–7 (heavily edited).

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Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

It might be good to see this section as a whole:

Psalm 95:6–9 Properly Divided Up

Discussion

Here, as we have seen elsewhere, the artificial separation of the Bible into chapters and verses, although extremely handy, has its downside. The first portion of this verse is better placed with v. 6, and the last line of this verse is better placed with v. 8. We lose a bit of the ebb and flow when we separate these verses. When this is quoted by the writer of Hebrews, he does the same thing; he takes the last line of this verse and places it with v. 8. Now it appears in the Hebrew as if the last line of this verse is a complete thought, whereas in the book of Hebrews, this appears to only be the protasis of a conditional clause; that is, an incomplete thought which depends upon the next verse for completion.

Psalm 95

Come, let us [be motivated to] worship
and let us bow down;
let us offer thanks for our blessings before the face of
Y^ehowah, our Maker
For He is our God
and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of
His hand.

Today, if you hear His voice
Do not cause your hearts to be hardened
as was done at Meribah
as occurred in the day at Massah
in the wilderness when your fathers tested Me;
when they proved Me,
even though they had seen My works!
(Psalm 95:6–9)

As mentioned before, it would have been better to simply split v. 7 between vv. 6 and 8. You can see while reading through this, it holds together much better as a continuous whole, as opposed to a verse here and a verse there.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Option 2: the Rebellion of Gen X

The day if in His voice you hear,...

Psalm
95:7b

Today, if you hear His voice,...

Now, today, if you hear His voice,...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text The day if in His voice you hear,...

Septuagint Today, if ye will hear his voice,... The LXX rightly places v. 7b with the next verse.

Significant differences: None, apart from the slight difference in verse division. The Latin Bible also divides the verse up in the same way.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Listen to God's voice today!

Good News Bible (TEV) Listen today to what he says:...

The Message Drop everything and listen, listen as he speaks:...

New Century Version Today listen to what he says:...

New Life Version If you hear His voice today,...

New Living Translation If only you would listen to his voice today!

Revised English Bible If only you would listen to him now!

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English Today, if you would only give ear to his voice!

Easy English (Churchyard) Today, if you hear his voice,...

God's Word™ If only you would listen to him today!

HCSB Today, if you hear His voice:...

JPS (Tanakh) O, if you would but heed His charge this day:...

NET Bible® Today, if only you would obey him [Hebrew: "if only you would listen to his voice."!] The Hebrew particle *אם* ('im, "if") and following prefixed verbal form here express a wish (cf. Psalm 81:8). Note that the apodosis (the "then" clause of the conditional sentence) is suppressed. See my notes in the Hebrew exegesis.

NIRV Listen to his voice today.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NRSV O that today you would listen to his voice!

WEB Today, oh that you would hear his voice!

Young's Updated LT Today, if you hear His voice,...

What is the gist of this verse? The last portion of this verse begins a protasis: [If today you hear His voice,...](#)

| Psalm 95:7b | | | |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| yôwm (יּוֹם) [pronounced yohm] | day; time; today (with a definite article) | masculine singular noun with the definite article | Strong's #3117 BDB #398 |
| ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced eem] | if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event) | primarily an hypothetical particle | Strong's #518 BDB #49 |
| <p>The particle ʾîm (אִם) can be used as a demonstrative (<i>lo, behold</i>), an interrogative (usually expecting a negative response and often used with other particles and rhetorically), and as a conditional particle (<i>if, though</i>); an indication of a wish or desire (<i>oh that, if only</i>; this is a rare usage).</p> | | | |
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced kohl] | sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering | masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix | Strong's #6963 BDB #876 |
| shâma ^ʿ (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAHG] | to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of | 2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect; pausal form | Strong's #8085 BDB #1033 |

Translation: [Today, if you hear His voice,...](#) After working with this for some time, I could see no other way than to separate v. 7 into two parts, the latter half properly beginning the latter portion of this psalm. Keil and Delitzsch concur, explaining that *the second decastich begins in the midst of the Masoretic v. 7.*²³ It is at this point where the psalmist takes a turn in the tenor of this psalm. Had you read the first portion of this psalm and later read the second, it is doubtful that you would have thought it to be a complete whole. Similarly, so few people have even a clue as to Who and What God is, that they only have a very limited grasp as to His character. Therefore, they might see His love and his mercy, but they do not realize that He is a holy God, a God of wrath. Now the psalmist presents to us another side of Him Who saved us.

Now, how do we tie these two disparate halves of Psalm 95 together? We have two approaches to Jesus Christ, our Lord: positive volition or negative volition. We can respond to His grace and all that He has provided for us with positive volition, which reasonably includes worship and respect; or we can respond with negative volition, and have our bodies strewn throughout the desert wilderness.

When the writer of this psalm asks us to listen to the voice of God, he then speaks for God in the first person. Recall, all Scripture is God-breathed, so this is more than just a literary device—this is God speaking directly to you. The writer of Hebrews was so moved as to quote this three times.

The first thing to note is the word *today*, which is literally *the day* in the Hebrew, but it means *today*. There are periods of time when God appeals to us; when God speaks to us, and at those times, we ought to listen. For the

²³ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. V, p. 620.

unbeliever, these are the times when the gospel is given. God does not make the gospel known to the unbeliever every minute of the day. I can recall two times when I heard it, and several times after that when I went back to the book of John and reread certain passages, and believed again, just in case. Once a woman more or less gave me the gospel. I had not even a clue as to what she was saying, but I knew there was a decision to be made. I have no idea even, at this point, what she said, and it was not enough information upon which I could base a decision; but I knew that a decision needed to be made. Soon thereafter, I had reason to be unhappy with my life, and, with circumstances which I still cannot recall, I found myself reading the book of John, where I came upon "Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved" and I believed. That is when I was saved. But, there were many things which occurred in my life prior to that when I should have heard the gospel, but I did not. My point being, God does not follow us around everywhere that we go with a flashing neon sign with the gospel on it. There are points in time for the unbeliever when the gospel is revealed; but God is a gentleman and God allows us to believe or not to believe.

As believers, the illustration here, we hear God's voice sometimes by choice (going to church); and sometimes not by choice (other believers, flipping through the radio or tv channels). The point at which we hear God's voice—today that is when we need to listen. God gives us a lot of break time. We can spend less time with God in a given day than we spend having meals, and still grow spiritually. But, the key is the word *today*; that is the day that we ought to hear and pay attention to God's voice. For the believer, that should be every day; for the unbeliever, that should be whatever day God speaks to you.

V. 7b is more than just the protasis to a conditional clause. The verb *to listen* or *to hear* includes the notion of obedience. In the KJV, we have the excellent rendering *hearken*; however, this word no longer communicates, so as we update the English, we also lose some of the meaning. Keil and Delitzsch maintain that this has a certain optative significance, as in *if only you would, today, listen and obey His voice!* However, we cannot discount the direct ties of this verse to the next, as was seen when we translated this above: **Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.**

| | | |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| <p>...you [all] will not harden your heart as Meribah [strife] as a day of Massah [testing, despair] in the wilderness;...</p> | <p>Psalm 95:8</p> | <p>...do not harden your hearts as [was done at] Meribah [strife], or as [was done in] the day of Massah [testing, despair] in the wilderness;...</p> |
|---|-----------------------|--|

...do not harden your hearts as was done at Meribah [or, *strife*], and as was done in the day of Massah [or, *testing, despair*] when, in the wilderness,...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Masoretic Text | ...you [all] will not harden your heart as Meribah [strife] as a day of Massah [testing, despair] in the wilderness... |
| Septuagint | ...harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, according to the day of temptation in the wilderness... |

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| CEV | Don't be stubborn and rebel as your ancestors did at Meribah and Massah out in the desert. |
| Good News Bible (TEV) | "Don't be stubborn, as your ancestors were at Meribah, as they were that day in the desert at Massah. |
| <i>The Message</i> | "Don't turn a deaf ear as in the Bitter Uprising, As on the day of the Wilderness Test,... |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| New Living Translation | The LORD says, "Don't harden your hearts as Israel did at Meribah, as they did at Massah in the wilderness. |
| Revised English Bible | Do not be stubborn, as you were at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the wilderness. |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Complete Apostles' Bible | Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, according to the day of trial in the wilderness;... |
| Easy English (Churchyard) | ...do not refuse to listen (to him). You did this at *Meribah and you did it one day at *Massah, in the *desert. |
| God's Word™ | "Do not be stubborn like my people were at Meribah, like the time at Massah in the desert. |
| HCSB | "Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the wilderness... |
| NET Bible® | He says [The words "he says" are supplied in the translation to clarify that the following words are spoken by the Lord (see vv. 9-11)], "Do not be stubborn like they were at Meribah [The name Meribah means "strife." Two separate but similar incidents at Meribah are recorded in the Pentateuch (Exod 17:1-7; Num 20:1-13, see also Pss 81:7; 106:32). In both cases the Israelites complained about lack of water and the Lord miraculously provided for them], like they were that day at Massah [The name Massah means "testing." This was another name (along with Meribah) given to the place where Israel complained following the Red Sea Crossing (see Exod 17:1-7, as well as Deut 6:16; 9:22; 33:8)] in the wilderness [Hebrew "do not harden your heart[s] as [at] Meribah, as [in] the day of Massah in the wilderness."]..... |
| NIRV | If you hear it, don't be stubborn as you were at Meribah. Don't be stubborn as you were that day at Massah in the desert. |

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| The Amplified Bible | Harden not your hearts as at Meribah and as at Massah in the day of temptation in the wilderness,... |
| A Conservative Version MKJV | Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, as the day of trial in the wilderness,.... ...harden not your heart, as <i>in the day of strife</i> , as <i>in the day of testing</i> in the wilderness;... |
| Young's Literal Translation | ...harden not your heart as <i>in Meribah</i> , As in the day of Massah <i>in the wilderness</i> ,... |

What is the gist of this verse? The psalmist is called upon the Israelite who hears this psalm, who hears the voice of God, not to harden their hearts, as was done as Meribah and at Massah.

| Psalm 95:8a | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| ʾal (אֵל) [pronounced a/] | <i>not; nothing; none</i> | adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done | Strong's #408 BDB #39. |

Psalm 95:8a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| qāshâh (קָשָׁה) [pronounced kaw-SHAWH] | <i>to [cause to] make hard [stiff], to harden [the neck]; to be obstinate [stubborn, obstinate, stubborn, pig-headed, self-willed]; to make [a yoke] heavy; to make [something] difficult [severe, burdensome]</i> | 2 nd person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect | Strong's #7185 BDB #904 |
| Often used with one's heart. | | | |
| lêbab (לֵבָב) [pronounced lay-BAHB ^v] | <i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i> | masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #3824 BDB #523 |

Translation: ...do not harden your hearts... The verb here is in the Hiphil, which means causative stem. Those to whom the psalmist is speaking *cause their own hearts to be hardened*. This particular verb has a lot of great renderings, including: *to be obstinate [stubborn, obstinate, stubborn, pig-headed, self-willed]; to make [a yoke] heavy; to make [something] difficult [severe, burdensome]*.

I have done some work on the hardness of heart, as have others, but I still feel that I have not properly fleshed out this topic.

Hardness of Heart Resources

The Hardness of Pharaoh's heart: http://kukis.org/Doctrines/Hardness_Pharaohs_Heart.htm

Doctrinal Sites:

<http://biblenews1.com/scartis/scartiss.htm>

<http://www.biblenews1.com/scartis/scartis1.htm>

<http://www.gbible.org/trees/011104.htm>

http://www.gbible.org/_files/pdf/blackout.pdf

<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d&sf=rea&did=3>

<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=tap&cat=doc&pg=H> (series which may be ordered)

<http://www.gdcmedia.org/MediaMins/archive.asp?cls=SP> (MP3 series which may be downloaded)

<http://www.biblefragrances.com/studies/docsh.html#anchor693426>

Unchecked resources:

Finney Sermon: http://www.gospeltruth.net/1844OE/440103_hardness_heart.htm

Spurgeon Sermon: http://blueletterbible.org/Comm/charles_spurgeon/sermons/1893.html

Some passages dealing with this topic: Ex. 8:15 1Sam. 6:6 Dan. 5:20 Acts 19:9 Rom. 2:5 Heb. 3:13, 12:25.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

There were two generations which left Egypt under the prodding of God through Moses: Gen X—those who were older than 20—and the generation of promise, those who were 20 and younger. It is this first generation which gives us hope—they were failures in so many ways, after seeing so much of the works of God. Again and again, they hardened their hearts—as believers—toward the will of God. And yet, God was faithful to them, and they are in Abraham's bosom. This gives me and my sorry life hope.

Psalm 95:8b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e] | <i>like, as, just as; according to; about, approximately</i> | preposition | No Strong's # BDB #453 |
| m ^e rîybâh (מֵרִיבָהּ) [pronounced m ^e ree ^b -VAW] | which means <i>strife, contention, provocation</i> and is transliterated <i>Meribah</i> . | feminine singular noun; also used as a proper noun | Strong's #4808 and #4809 BDB #937 |

Strong's #4808 is the feminine singular noun; and Strong's #4809 is the proper noun. They are identical.

Translation: ...*as* [was done at] *Meribah* [*strife*],... You will note quite a difference in [or, of] prepositions in the various translations. Owens renders this *at* Meribah and Young *in* Meribah. The only preposition found here is the word for *as, for, because*. Meribah means *strife, contention, provocation*. After the next phrase, we will look at this historical incident.

Psalm 95:8c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|--|------------------------------|
| kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e] | <i>like, as, just as; according to; about, approximately</i> | preposition | No Strong's # BDB #453 |
| yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm] | <i>day; time; today</i> (with a definite article) | masculine singular construct | Strong's #3117 BDB #398 |
| massâ (מַסָּא) [pronounced mahs-SAW] | <i>despair; testing, trial; temptation; calamity; transliterated Massah</i> | feminine singular noun; also used as a proper noun | Strong's #4531#4532 BDB #588 |

Strong's #4531 is the feminine noun; Strong's #4532 is the proper noun.

| | | | |
|---|---|--|-------------------------|
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| mid ^e bâr (מִדְבָּר) [pronounced mid ^e -BAWR] | <i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness; mouth</i> | masculine singular noun; with the definite article | Strong's #4057 BDB #184 |

Translation: ...or as [was done in] the day of Massah [testing, despair] in the wilderness;... I believe the proper sense here is that *Massah* and *Meribah* are not used here as *locations*, per se, but as *metonymies* for what occurred at those locations. I know you didn't quite get that. You're thinking, *but that's what they named those places*. Sure, these proper nouns are locations; they are, in themselves, definite geographical places. However, the psalmist is referring not to the places as much as he is referring to *what happened at those places*. *Meribah* means *place of strife*. *Massah* means *testing*. What occurred at those places is that Israel contended with God over His ability to care for them and they tested God concerning His omnipotence. Now, even if you don't get the point, the writer of Hebrews did and he skipped the geological references and launched right into what the Israelites did instead; that is, he translated the words instead of transliterating them. **Do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me as in the day of trial [or, testing] in the wilderness** (Heb. 3:8).

One of the first tests which the Jews faced after being delivered from the Egyptians was a no-water test. They began to move through the desert wilderness and they had no water to drink and there were no streams of water or lakes with which they could refresh themselves. **And all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the command of the Lord, and pitched in Rephidim. And there was no water for the people to drink. And the people contend with Moses and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said to them, Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt Jehovah? And the people thirsted there for water. And the people murmured against Moses and said, Why is this, that You brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our sons and our cattle with thirst?** (Ex. 17:1–3). These are the words of Gen X, the Meribah Generation. They are upset with God, and with Moses, God's chosen leader over them.

Obviously, being in the desert without water is a serious thing, and Moses went to God for help. **And Moses cried to Jehovah, saying, What shall I do to this people? They are almost ready to stone me. And Jehovah said to Moses, Go on in front of the people, and take with you the elders of Israel. And take your rod with which you struck the river, in your hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there upon the rock in Horeb. And you shall smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, so that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel** (Ex. 17:4–6). This is a picture of Jesus Christ dying for our sins. The Rock (Jesus Christ) would be struck by Moses, and out of it would flow living waters.

Moses named this place where they were. **And he called the name of the place Massah [despair, testing, temptation], and Meribah [strife, contention], because of the contention of the sons of Israel, and because they tempted Jehovah, saying, Is Jehovah among us or not?** (Ex. 17:7). These Israelites saw the great power of God again and again, and yet they continued to ask, "Is Jehovah with us or not?" *That* is negative volition.

When it comes to translating this verse in the psalms, it is difficult to achieve the same affect as the writer of this psalm. When this verse is rendered literally, you don't realize that writer is using the names of these places; but, when *transliterated*, you lose the meaning of the words.

Forty years later, after God had killed off almost every member of Gen X, the generation of promise faced a no-water test. Sadly, this younger generation seemed to recall the words and sentiments of their dead fathers, but they did not seem to recall or understand God's great power. **And the people of Israel, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. And Miriam died there and was buried there. Now there was no water for the congregation. And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. And the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD!** (Num. 20:1–3). By the way, these were not their *brothers* who died, but their mothers and fathers. They make the same sort of accusations against Moses as their fathers had: **Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should die here, both we and our cattle? And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink.**" (Num. 20:4–5).

Now, to be precise, this psalm probably refers only to the first incident, the no-water incident of Gen X. However, there is no reason why we cannot take a quick look at how the Generation of Promise did when faced with the same circumstances.

So Moses and Aaron were stuck there, this angry mob in front of them. Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them, and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water. So you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle." (Num. 20:6–8). The Rock, again, is Jesus Christ. However, Moses has already struck the Rock back in Ex. 17. Jesus Christ died one time for all of our sins; He took upon Himself one time the punishment which we all deserved, which was poured out on Him on the cross for 3 hours. Therefore, Moses was not to strike the Rock this time, because he had struck the rock before. This time, Moses is to speak to the Rock, which is the shadow equivalent of believing in Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, Moses failed here. And Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he commanded him. Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock (Num. 20:9–11). God wanted a picture here; God wanted salvation through faith in Jesus Christ to be portrayed here. This is not done by Moses striking the Rock, which would suggest that Jesus dies a second (and a third) time for our sins. The picture that God wanted was, Moses speaking to the Rock, as we speak to Jesus in faith for our salvation, so that we may drink of the living waters which flow from Him (John 4:10ff).

God is gracious; God provided for the undeserving Israelites, but He took Moses and Aaron aside and spoke to them about their failure. And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them." These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and through them he showed himself holy (Num. 29:12–13). You may want a position of some sort of fame, but bear in mind, you must bear more responsibility for your life. Almost anyone, in comparing the sins of the Generation of Promise to the sins of Moses, would view Moses's sins as being very minor and inconsequential. However, for this wrongful act on the part of Moses, God would not allow Moses to enter into the Land of Promise, and He will allow the Generation of Promise to do so (and they will enter and they will take the land). The difference is, Moses has a greater position of power and authority, so God holds him to a higher standard. Furthermore, as we have observed, God was using these *no-water* tests as evangelical messages, and Moses botched up that message.

How often they rebelled against Him in the wilderness and grieved Him in the desert. And again and again, they tempted God and pained the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His power, nor did they remember the day when He redeemed them from their adversary (Psalm 78:40–41). So the psalmist recounts Gen X.

Spurgeon writes: *Be not wilfully, wantonly, repeatedly, obstinately rebellious. Let the example of that unhappy generation serve as a beacon to you; do not repeat the offences which have already more than enough provoked the Lord.*²⁴

Psalm 78 would be a good companion psalm, as it documents the failures of Israel.²⁵

**...when tested Me your fathers
examined Me also they saw My work.**

Psalm
95:9

**...when your fathers tested Me
[and] scrutinized Me even though they have
seen My works...**

...your fathers tested Me and they scrutinized Me; even though they had seen My works.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

²⁴ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 95:8.

²⁵ I worked on Psalm 78 at least a decade ago and have not updated it since then.

Masoretic Text ...when tested Me your fathers
 examined Me also they saw My work.
 Septuagint ...where your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works.
 Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV For forty years they tested God and saw the things he did.
 Good News Bible (TEV) There they put me to the test and tried me, although they had seen what I did for them.
The Message ...when your ancestors turned and put me to the test.
 New Life Version Your early fathers put Me to the test and tried Me. But they had seen the work I did.
 New Living Translation For there your ancestors tested and tried my patience, even though they saw everything I did.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English When your fathers put me to the test and saw my power and my work.
 Easy English (Churchyard) There, your fathers *tested me to discover what I could do.
 But they had already seen my work!
God's Word™ Your ancestors challenged me and tested me there, although they had seen what I had done.
 JPS (Tanakh) when your fathers put Me to the test,
 tried Me, though they had seen My deeds.
 NET Bible® ...where your ancestors challenged my authority, [Hebrew "where your fathers tested me."]
 and tried my patience, even though they had seen my work.
 NIRV There your people of long ago really put me to the test.
 They did it even though they had seen what I had done for them.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Conservative Version ...where your fathers challenged me, proved me, and saw my work.
 English Standard Version ...when your fathers put me to the test and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.
Young's Literal Translation ...where your fathers have tried Me, Have proved Me, yea, have seen My work.

What is the gist of this verse? The Israelites tested God in the desert wilderness, even though they had seen His power and work.

| Psalm 95:9a | | | |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|
| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
| ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER] | that, which, when, who, whom | relative pronoun | Strong's #834 BDB #81 |
| nâçâh (נָצַח) [pronounced naw-SAWH] | to test, to try, to attempt, to try to do a thing; to practice doing a thing | 3 rd person plural, Piel perfect; with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #5254 BDB #650 |

Psalm 95:9a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|---|---|--------------------------|
| ʾāb (אָב) [pronounced aw ^b v] | <i>father</i> , both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; <i>founder</i> , <i>civil leader</i> , <i>military leader</i> | masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix | Strong's #1 BDB #3 |

Translation: ...when your fathers tested Me... The relative pronoun which begins this verse could be rendered *when*, *who*, *which*. Since the last phrase was *in the day of Massah in the wilderness*, *when* is most appropriate. The first verb is the Piel perfect of *nâçâh*, a word which means *test*, *try*. This is a great word whose meaning is determined by the subject and the object. Our English equivalent is quite similar. As a teacher, I *test* my students; this is perfectly legitimate. However, when my students *test* me, this is something entirely different. It is legitimate for God to test us; our testing of Him is wrong, however. “You will not put Y^howah your God to the test, as you tested at Massah.” (Deut. 6:16).

There is another way in which God was tested: this generation tempted God to wipe out the Exodus generations and start anew with Moses. And Jehovah spoke to Moses, Come, go down, for your people whom you caused to go up from Egypt are corrupted; they have quickly turned off from the way which I commanded them; they have made for themselves a casted calf and have bowed to it, and have sacrificed to it. And they have said, These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt (Ex. 32:7–8). Moses was receiving the Law from God, and these people—Gen X—were making a golden calf to worship. Ex. 32:9–10: And Jehovah said to Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people. And now leave Me alone that My anger may glow against them, that I may consume them. And I will make you a great nation. God tells Moses that He is ready to wipe out this people and begin anew with Moses and his sons. Ex. 32:11–13: And Moses prayed before the face of Jehovah his God, and he said, Why, O Jehovah, does Your anger glow against Your people whom You caused to go up from the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, For evil He has caused them to go up, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them on the face of the earth? Turn from Your fierce anger and be moved to pity as to the evil to Your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants to whom You swore by Yourself, and You spoke to them, I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens, and all this land which I have said, I will give to your seed. And they shall possess it forever. Moses now acts as an intercessor for these people—these people who do not deserve an intercessor—and so, in this way, Moses is a type of Christ in this way.

Ex. 32:14: And Jehovah was moved to pity concerning the evil which He had spoken to do to His people. God is not moved to pity. This is an anthropopathism, where a human emotion is assigned to God in order to communicate what is happening. God wants Moses to stand up for this people; God closely identifies these wayward Jews with Moses, calling them *your people*. Moses, in this way, is a type of Christ; Moses acts as an intercessor for these people who do not deserve intercession. Just as Christ dies for us, who deserve no mercy; and then lives to make intercession for us; Moses makes intercession for these people as well. Furthermore, Moses will die, before these people enter into the land; again, as a type of Christ.

Psalm 95:9b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| bâchan (בָּחַן) [pronounced baw-KHAHN] | <i>to examine</i> , <i>to [carefully] scrutinize</i> , <i>to test</i> , <i>to try</i> , <i>to prove</i> ; <i>to look out</i> , <i>to watch</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect; with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #974 BDB #103 |
| gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm] | <i>also</i> , <i>furthermore</i> , <i>in addition to</i> , <i>even</i> , <i>moreover</i> | adverb | Strong's #1571 BDB #168 |

Psalm 95:9b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|
| I rendered this <i>even though</i> . | | | |
| râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH] | <i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #7200 BDB #906 |
| pô`al (לָעַל) [pronounced POH-gah] | <i>work, deed, act, doing; that which is made; acquisition; that which is produced by working (wages)</i> | masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #6467 BDB #821 |

Gill tells us: *The Syriac version joins the "forty years" at the beginning of the next verse to this; the phrase standing in such a situation as to be connected with both, and is true of each; so the apostle uses it both ways, Heb. 3:9.²⁶ It is not this way in the Peshitta which I have, but the 40 years can reasonably be tied to this and the following verse.*

Translation:...[\[and\] scrutinized Me even though they have seen My works...](#) The second verb is the Qal perfect of bâchan, which means *to examine, to try, to scrutinize, to prove*. God is allowed *to scrutinize, to prove, to examine and to try us*; we are not given the same opportunity. When God does this, His motives are *to determine the essential qualities of the object, especially integrity. It is used almost exclusively in the spiritual sense.*²⁷ When we do this, we do so because we doubt God's integrity. This is why it is right for God *to scrutinize us* but it is wrong for us *to try Him*. In a classroom situation, I gave tests to "A" students, even when I knew almost in certainty that they would make an "A" on the test. God knows with absolute certainty what tests we will pass and which we will fail. However, we are being observed by an whole cloud of witnesses, all of angelic creation, who cannot see into our souls (although they are exceptional perceptive and intuitive do to their centuries of observation and their great intelligence); furthermore, we ourselves are encouraged when we are tested and we pass; and we are reproved, often by ourselves, when we are tested and we fail. In our academic lives, many of us have benefitted by being tested and then examining the results of being tested.

It is incorrect to think of this as meaning *to tempt to sin*. They have put God's patience and character to the test. They do this because they have no faith in Him.

The Israelites were totally out of line to test and to try God, as He had proven Himself to them with the works which He had already performed in their behalf. Let's see if you can grasp this. God would perform a miracle and everything is fine. Two days later, they are complaining, demanding to see another miracle, to make certain that everything is okay, as though God's character and faithfulness had somehow changed in that short of time. ["Certainly all the men who have seen My glory and My signs, which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet they have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice."](#) (Num. 14:22). Playing the devil's advocate, I have thought, *now just how many of the two million actually observed His signs and wonders?* You see, if a couple thousand observed the signs and wonders, and the remainder of the population did not, then their unbelief is more understandable, if not excusable. However, everyone was thirsty during the two no-water tests and everyone drank of the water provided by God. As we have studied, there was a huge amount of water which proceeded from the rock, enough to essentially make a river in a very short amount of time. Secondly, at Mount Sinai, *everyone* heard the voice of God and it frightened them so much that they asked if God would speak only to Moses directly and they would listen to Moses. And, finally, they all ate God's manna, the bread from heaven, every single day. [And the sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land;](#)

²⁶ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:9.

²⁷ *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; p 2304.

they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan (Ex. 16:35). Therefore, all of Israel experienced firsthand—daily in fact—God’s grace and provision.

Clarke summarizes this verse: *[They] tried me, by their insolence, unbelief, and blasphemy. They proved me - they had full proof of my power to save and to destroy. There they saw my works - they saw that nothing was too hard for God.*²⁸

Or, as Gill put it: *[They] had proof of His power, goodness, and mercy, in providing for them, and in the preservation of them: or "tried" Him, His patience, longsuffering, and forbearance, by their repeated provocations of Him. And they saw My work; God’s work of judgment upon their enemies the Egyptians, by inflicting plagues upon them, and by the destruction of Pharaoh and his host at the Red sea; and God’s work of goodness to them, in bringing them out of bondage, leading them through the Red sea safely, raining manna about their tents, and giving them water out of the rock; or particularly his work in consuming them in the wilderness, as He swore He would, and which they saw with their eyes.*²⁹

We are told several times not to test our Lord:

| Do Not Test God | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Scripture | Quotation |
| Psalm 78:17–22 | Yet they sinned still more against Him, to provoke the Most High in the desert. And they tested God in their heart, by asking food for their souls. And they spoke against God, saying, Shall God be able to set a table in the wilderness? Behold! He struck the rock and the waters gushed out, and the torrents were overflowing. Can He also give bread? Will He provide flesh for His people? So Jehovah heard and He passed over, and a fire was kindled against Jacob, and also anger went up against Israel, because they did not believe in God and trusted not in His salvation. This psalm parallels our psalm in this respect, and speaks of this loser Gen X generation, the Meribah Generation. |

²⁸ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:9.

²⁹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:9 (slightly edited).

| Do Not Test God | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Scripture | Quotation |
| Psalm 78:40–59 | <p>How often they disobeyed Him in the wilderness, angering Him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tested God, and pained the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His hand, on the day He redeemed them from the enemy; who set His signs in Egypt, and His wonders in the field of Zoan. He turned their rivers into blood, also their streams that they might not drink. He sent swarms of flies against them, and they devoured them; also frogs, and they destroyed them. He also gave their crops to the stripping locust, and their labor to the locust. He killed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with sleet. He gave their cattle up to the hail, and their flocks to bolts of fire. He sent the heat of His anger on them, fury and indignation and distress, a sending of angels of evils. He leveled a path for His anger; He did not keep back their soul from death, but gave their life over to the plague. And he struck all the first-born in Egypt, the firstfruits of strength in the tents of Ham; and He led His people forth like sheep; and He led them like a flock in the wilderness. And he led them on safely, and they did not fear; but the sea flooded over their enemies. He brought them to the border of His holy place; this mountain that His right hand had gained. And He cast out the nations before them; and by a line He made a possession fall to them; and He made the tribes of Israel to live in their tents. Yet they tested and provoked the Most High God; and they did not keep His testimonies; but they turned back and betrayed, like their fathers; they veered aside like a deceitful bow. For they enraged Him with their high places; and they provoked Him to jealousy with their molten images. When God heard, and He passed over, and He utterly rejected Israel. In the same psalm, the psalmist castigates this Meribah Generation.</p> |
| 1Cor. 10:6–11 | <p>But these things became examples for us, so that we may not be lusters after evil, even as those indeed lusted. Neither be idolaters, even as some of them, as it has been written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play." (Ex. 32:6) Nor should we commit fornication, as some of them fornicated, and twenty three thousand fell in one day. Neither test Christ, as some of them tried Him, and perished by serpents. Neither should you murmur, as also some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer. And all these things happened to those as examples, and it was written for our warning, on whom the ends of the ages have come. Even Paul warns the Corinthians of displaying the same kind of negative volition which Gen X displayed; warning them not to test Jesus Christ.</p> |

These were taken from *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Psalm 95:9.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Forty a year I loath in a generation;
and I say, "A people who are erring a heart
they;
and they have not known My ways."

Psalm
95:10

[For] forty years I loathed [that] generation,
and I said, "They [are] a people who are going
astray [in their] thinking [lit., hearts];
and they have not known My ways."

For forty long years, I loathed that generation,
and I said, "This people continues to go astray in their thinking;
furthermore, they have not known My ways."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Latin Vulgate | Forty years long was I offended with that generation, and I said, <u>These</u> always err in heart. And these men have not known my ways... The Latin places the last phrase of v. 10 with v. 11. |
| Masoretic Text | Forty a year I loath in a generation; and I say, "A people who are erring a heart they; and they have not known My ways." |
| Septuagint | Forty years was I grieved with this generation, and said, <u>They</u> do always err in their heart, and they have not known my ways. |
| Significant differences: | The Hebrew and Peshitta have the word <i>people</i> ; the Greek and Latin do not. |

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| CEV | Then God got tired of them and said, "You never show good sense, and you don't understand what I want you to do." |
| Good News Bible (TEV) | For forty years I was disgusted with those people. I said, 'How disloyal they are! They refuse to obey my commands.' |
| <i>The Message</i> | For forty years they watched me at work among them, as over and over they tried my patience. And I was provoked--oh, was I provoked! 'Can't they keep their minds on God for five minutes? Do they simply refuse to walk down my road?' |
| New Century Version | I was angry with those people for forty years. I said, 'They are not loyal to me and have not understood my ways.' |
| New Jerusalem Bible | For forty years that generation sickened me, and I said, 'Always fickle hearts; they cannot grasp my ways.' |
| New Life Version | I was angry with the people of that day for forty years. I said, "They always think wrong thoughts. And they do not know My ways." |
| New Living Translation | For forty years I was angry with them, and I said, 'They are a people whose hearts turn away from me. They refuse to do what I tell them.' |
| Revised English Bible | For forty years I abhorred that generation and said: 'They are a people whose hearts are astray, who do not discern my ways.' |

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Bible in Basic English | For forty years I was angry with this generation, and said, They are a people whose hearts are turned away from me, for they have no knowledge of my ways;... |
| Easy English (Churchyard) | For 40 years I was angry with those people. And I said, "They are people that refuse to obey me. They (say that they) do not know what I want them to do". |
| <i>God's Word</i> ™ | For 40 years I was disgusted with those people. So I said, 'They are a people whose hearts continue to stray. They have not learned my ways.' |
| PS (Tanakh) | Forty years I was provoked by that generation; I thought, "They are a senseless people; they would not know My ways." |
| NET Bible® | For forty years I was continually disgusted [The prefixed verbal form is either a preterite or an imperfect. If the latter, it emphasizes the ongoing nature of the condition in the past. The translation reflects this interpretation of the verbal form] with that generation, |

and I said, `These people desire to go astray; [Hebrew "a people, wanderers of heart [are] they"]
 they do not obey my commands [Hebrew "and they do not know my ways." In this context the Lord's "ways" are his commands, viewed as a pathway from which his people, likened to wayward sheep (see v. 7), wander.]'

NIRV

For 40 years I was angry with them.
 I said, "Their hearts are always going down the wrong path.
 They do not know how I want them to live."

Today's NIV

For forty years I was angry with that generation;
 I said, 'They are a people whose hearts go astray,
 and they have not known my ways.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible

Forty years long was I grieved and disgusted with that generation, and I said, It is a people that do err in their hearts, and they do not approve, acknowledge, or regard My ways.

English Standard Version

For forty years I loathed that generation and said, "They are a people who go astray in their heart, and they have not known my ways."

NASB

"For forty years I loathed that generation,
 And said they are a people who err in their heart,
 And they do not know My ways.

NRSV

For forty years I loathed that generation
 and said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray,
 and they do not regard my ways."

WEB

Forty long years I was grieved with that generation, And said, "It is a people that errs in their heart. They have not known my ways."

Young's Updated LT

Forty years I am weary of the generation, And I say, "A people erring in heart—they! And they have not known My ways."

What is the gist of this verse? For 40 years, God loathed Gen X, saying "This people errs in their thinking and they do not know Me."

Psalm 95:10a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|--|--|-----------------------------|
| ʿar ^e bâ ^ʿ îym (אַרְבַּע־עֶשְׂרֵים) [pronounced ar ^e -BAW-GEEM] | <i>forty</i> | undeclined plural noun | Strong's #705 BDB #917 |
| shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW] | <i>year</i> | feminine singular noun | Strong's #8141 BDB #1040 |
| At least one ancient manuscript places <i>forty years</i> back with the previous verse, where the Israelites tested God for 40 years, even having observed His works . There is nothing inspired or magical about verse delineations. I do not know enough about Hebrew poetry and meter to properly place these two words. Personally, I would split the difference and let these two words stand on their own, in between vv. 9 and 10, so that they apply both to what came before and what comes now. | | | |
| qûṭ (קוּט) [pronounced koof] | <i>to loath, to nauseate, to be disgusted with</i> | 1 st person singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #6962 BDB #876 |
| Generally followed by the bêyth preposition. | | | |

Psalm 95:10a

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| The Greek equivalent of this word (found in both the LXX and in Heb. 3:10, which quotes this passage, is <i>prosochthizo</i> (προσοχθίζω), and Thayer gives the following definitions: 1) to be wroth or displeased with; 2) to loathe; 3) to spew out; 4) to be disgusted with. Strong's #4360. | | | |
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| The Latin and Greek both insert a demonstrative pronoun <i>that, this</i> . | | | |
| dôwr (דֹּוֹר) [pronounced <i>dohr</i>] | <i>generation; race; people; age, period, time period [of a generation], a time slice</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #1755 BDB #189 |

Translation: [For] forty years I loathed [that] generation,... The first verb is the Qal imperfect of *qûṭ* and it means *to loath, to nauseate, to be disgusted with*; however, this occurs very few times in the Old Testament. It is found in the Qal perfect in Ezek. 16:47, the Niphal in Ezek. 6:9 20:43 26:31 and in the Hithpoel in Psalm 119:158 139:21. “For forty years, He bore them as a nursemaid in the wilderness.” (Acts 13:18). “Because you are insipid,...I will vomit you out of My mouth.” (Rev. 3:16).

Literally, this reads: **Forty years I loathed a generation**; which refers to the generation of failure, or Gen X. The *no-water* failure previously cited was one of a series of spectacular failures. There are people today who think that the Christian life should be filled with a spectacular number of miracles and healings, and that the power of God is so revealed. These people observed first-hand incredible signs and miracles, and again and again, they never oriented to Who and What God is. God revealed Himself in His Word, and Moses taught Bible class probably every night; and yet, they never caught on, and almost every man and woman of that generation died the sin unto death in the desert wilderness (Caleb and Joshua were the notable exceptions).

These 40 years are mentioned throughout Scripture: Num. 14:33–34 32:13 Deut. 1:3 2:14–16 3:9, Heb. 3:10, 17. It took the spies 40 days to search out the land of Israel and to bring back a report. Caleb and Joshua were ready to go back into the land and take it; however, the rest of the adults whined and moaned and cried all night, unable and unwilling to go into the land to take it, despite seeing the many signs which God performed. So, God gave them a year for each of those 40 days, and Gen X, He killed in the desert.

Because of their spectacular failures, some teach that Gen X were just a bunch of unbelievers, and God killed them for their unbelief. I am sure there are some out there who teach that these were believers, but they got so far out of line that they turned back into unbelievers (which is nonsense, as we are saved based upon what Christ did for us on the cross).

Gen X was Made up of Believers

| Scripture | Incident |
|--|---|
| <p>And Moses answered and said, But, listen, they will not believe me nor listen to my voice. For they will say, Jehovah has not appeared to you. And Jehovah said to him, What is this in your hand? And he said, A staff. And He said, Throw it on the ground. And he threw it on the ground. And it became a serpent. And Moses ran from it. And Jehovah said to Moses, Put forth your hand and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a staff in his hand, -- so that they may believe that Jehovah, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you. And Jehovah said to him again, Now put your hand in your bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom. And when he took it out, behold, his hand was as leprous as snow. And He said, Put your hand into your bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again. And he brought it out of his bosom, and behold, it was turned again like his other flesh. And it will be, if they will not believe you, neither listen to the voice of the first sign, then they will believe the voice of the latter sign. And also it will be, if they will not believe these two signs, neither listen to your voice, then you shall take from the water of the river and pour it upon the dry land. And the water which you take out of the river shall become blood on the dry land (Ex. 4:1–9).</p> | <p>Moses complains to God that the Jews will not listen to him, and God assures him over and over again, that these signs will convince the Jews to believe him.</p> <p>Now, the text actually deals with Moses and the Egyptians, and how the Egyptians would react, but the principle is the same for Israel. When these signs would begin to occur, more and more Jews would have faith in Jehovah Elohim.</p> |
| <p>And Aaron spoke all the words which Jehovah had spoken to Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed. And when they heard that Jehovah had visited the sons of Israel, and that He had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed and worshiped (Ex. 4:30–30).</p> | <p>These signs were done in front of the people of God, and they believed when they saw. No doubt, there were some who did not, whose faith would come on board with each successive sign performed by God.</p> |
| <p>And Moses called to all the elders of Israel and said to them, Draw out and take of the flock for you and for your families, and kill the Passover. And take a bunch of hyssop and dip in the blood in the basin. And touch some of the blood in the basin to the lintel and on the two doorposts. And you shall not go out, anyone from the door of his house until morning. And Jehovah will pass through to strike Egypt. And He will see the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, and Jehovah will pass over the door. And He will not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you (Ex. 12:21–23).</p> <p>And the sons of Israel went out and did as Jehovah commanded Moses and Aaron. So they did. And it happened at midnight. Jehovah struck every first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh, the one sitting on the throne, to the first-born of the captive who was in the prison house, and every first-born of animals. And Pharaoh arose by night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians. And there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not a one who had died (Ex. 12:28–30).</p> | <p>The blood on the doorposts and above and below represent the places where Jesus bled from on the cross. The slaughtered Passover lamb represents Jesus dying for our sins.</p> <p>The Jews obviously believed God, and they observed the first Passover, and their firstborn were saved.</p> |

Gen X was Made up of Believers

| Scripture | Incident |
|--|--|
| <p>And all the people answered together and said, All which Jehovah has spoken we will do. And Moses brought back the words of the people to Jehovah. And Jehovah said to Moses, Behold, I come to you in a darkness of clouds, so that the people may hear My speaking with you, and in you they may believe forever. And Moses told the words of the people to Jehovah (Ex. 19:8–9).</p> | <p>The Jews, in the 3rd month, tell Moses that they will do the words of Jehovah, which means they believe that Jehovah God is speaking to Moses.</p> |

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

As mentioned in the Hebrew exegesis, it is not clear where 40 years belongs. Allow me to suggest:

Repositioning 40 Years

Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts
 as [was done at] Meribah [strife],
 or as [was done in] the day of Massah [testing, despair] in the wilderness;
 when your fathers tested Me
 [and] scrutinized Me
 even though they have seen My works
 [for] forty years
 I loathed [that] generation,
 and I said, “They [are] a people who are going astray [in their] thinking [lit., hearts];
 and they have not known My ways.”
 [Concerning] whom I swore in My wrath, “They will not enter into My rest!”

In reading the above, this does make more sense for 40 years to be associated with what came before; it flows better and makes a great deal of sense. However, there is no doubt that *God loathed that generation for 40 years.*

The time frame of 40 years appears to fit in well with everything in its vicinity.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

There are two generations of Israelites who came out of Egypt, both of which failed on numerous occasions. The failure of the Meribah Generation (Gen X) was complete, and they died the sin unto death. God let their bodies drop dead in the desert wilderness for these 40 years. Actually, God took many of them out Himself. Heb. 3:17: **But with whom was He grieved forty years? Was it not with those who had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?** God had to purge Israel of these men and women, who left Egypt as adults, but never grew one iota spiritually. Their sons and daughters, the generation of promise, would also fail on several occasions—including the no-water test which their parents also failed; but they are willing to follow Joshua into battle or take the land, so obviously, there was some spiritual growth on their parts.

In any case, the focus of this half of Psalm 95 is upon the generation which failed absolutely and died the sin unto death (at least, for the most part).

Now, when this psalm reads, “I loathed that generation” this is an anthropathism. It is a human characteristic which is applied to God in order to explain His actions or motivation. As believers, we are under God’s love; even

those who are out of fellowship and even those who are in reversionism. Once you are a believer, God cannot hate you. However, to explain to us God's actions, we have the verbiage, "And God loathed that generation." And God left their rotting corpses on the desert sand. All of these believers will spend eternity in God's presence; but to help us to understand how God deals with us when in negative volition and when rebelling against Him, this sort of language is used.

Psalm 95:10b

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------|
| wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah] | <i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i> | wâw consecutive | No Strong's # BDB #253 |
| ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR] | <i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i> | 1 st person singular, Qal imperfect | Strong's #559 BDB #55 |
| ʿam (עַם) [pronounced ʿahm] | <i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i> | masculine singular construct; collective noun | Strong's #5971 BDB #766 |
| The word <i>people</i> is not found in the Greek or Latin. | | | |
| tâʾâh (תָּאַה) [pronounced taw-GAWH] | <i>erring; going astray [by sin], [physically, mentally] wandering [about]; to staggering [from intoxication]; perishing</i> | masculine plural construct, Qal active participle | Strong's #8582 BDB #1073 |
| Tâʾâh refers to wandering without a guide, to sheep going astray without a shepherd, to a person acting without a moral compass. | | | |
| lêbab (לֵבָב) [pronounced lay-BAHBʹ] | <i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i> | masculine singular noun | Strong's #3824 BDB #523 |
| hêm (הֵם) [pronounced haym] | <i>they</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, personal pronoun | Strong's #1931 BDB #214 |

Translation: ...and I said, "They [are] a people who are going astray [in their] thinking [lit., heart];... When speaking of a *people*, this means that this entire generation had the same essential problem; they were all prone to wander away from God.

The next verb is the Qal active participle of tâwâh, which means *to go astray, to wander*; this is the word found in Isa. 53:6: *all we like sheep have gone astray*. It is wandering without a guide and without directions, sheep going astray without a shepherd, a person acting without a moral compass. "And they were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every beast of the field and were scattered. My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill and My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth; and there was no one to search or seek for them." (Ezek. 34:5–6). Obviously, it was not that they lacked a shepherd, but that they chose function as if they did not have one.

The *heart* refers to the thinking of the one going astray. This is the key to all apostasy, all degeneracy and all sin. What goes on in your thinking is the basis of your life. When our thoughts are out of control, your life is out of control. Recall the carnal Corinthians, renown for their degenerate behavior even as regenerated; Paul wrote to them: *Destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and taking every thought prisoner to the authority of Christ*. That is the key to your Christian life and this was the key to the

degeneracy of the exodus generation. They went astray in their thinking. What goes on in your mind is the key to the Christian way of life.

As pointed out, they saw a number of spectacular miracles; but their faith was weak because they had nothing in their minds. The key is what is in the soul. I am fairly certain that I have a governor on my truck, as the fastest it will drive is 55 mph, and all conditions have to be right for it to climb to that speed. It won't go to 60, no matter what I do, short of dropping it out of a plane. Your thinking acts as a governor for your actions. The more Bible doctrine you have in your soul, the more easily you have control over your life. There are things that I would have done as an unbeliever—in fact, even as a believer—but doctrine acts as a governor, a regulator, something which has an effect as to how fast I can go.

*Gill comments: They not only had erred, but they continued to do so; and their errors were not merely through weakness, ignorance, and mistake, but were voluntary, and with their whole hearts; they sprung from their hearts, which were desperately wicked; they erred willingly and wilfully; and this the Lord, the searcher of hearts, knew and took notice of.*³⁰

I write this in the year 2008, and it turns out that one of our candidates for president has spent about 20 years going to a radical Black separatist church. I don't mean that the congregants get up and dance in the aisles and clap and say *Amen* all the time (although they do this), but that the pastor has taught, on occasion, that the United States government has purposely both caused and spread the AIDS virus in order to kill Black people, that the United States government is involved in the distribution of drugs so that we can put a lot of Black men in prison, and that we deserved the attacks of 9/11. The pastor goes astray in his thinking. His congregants go astray in their thinking. Gen X periodically would say, "We need to elect some leaders to take us back to Egypt." This congregation, in part at least, has found a leader to teach them hatred and paranoia. They teach that the United States government is out to get Black people; Gen X said that Moses and Aaron dragged them all out to the desert to kill them there. These men have gone astray in their thinking; these men have wandered far away from truth; and because of this, the words and actions are irrational and wrong-headed.

Psalm 95:10c

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|---|---|---|----------------------------|
| w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>] | <i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i> | simple wâw conjunction | No Strong's # BDB #251 |
| hêm ^ʿ (הֵם) [pronounced <i>haym</i>] | <i>they</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, personal pronoun | Strong's #1931 BDB #214 |
| lô ^ʿ (לֹא or אֵין) [pronounced <i>low</i>] | <i>not, no</i> | negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation | Strong's #3808 BDB #518 |
| yâda ^ʿ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHḠ</i>] | <i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see; to learn</i> | 3 rd person plural, Qal perfect | Strong's #3045 BDB #393 |
| derek ^e (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek^e</i>] | <i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i> | masculine plural noun with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #1870 BDB #202 |

³⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:10.

Translation: *...and they have not known My ways.*” The final verb of this verse is the Qal perfect of *yâda* , which means *to know*. What we ought to know are *His ways, His paths, His direction; His moral character*. What is indicated is, we need to know *Who and What God is*; and we need to know *His ways and His paths*. We need to know God’s character and we need to know what we ought to do.

The key to the spiritual life is the thinking; one knows God’s ways through only one means and that is knowledge of doctrine. We don’t get it from sitting around meditating; we don’t get it from trying to have little happy thoughts about God or about everyone that we know. Our thinking is only brought to the truth through God’s Word, and that as taught by a trained pastor-teacher.

Now would be a good time to examine all of the times that Israel failed during the exodus and the time that they spent in the desert (this chart was taken from **Psalm 106**).

All of Israel’s Failures in the Desert-Wilderness; God’s Grace and/or Discipline

| Scripture | Incident |
|--------------------|--|
| Ex. 14:8–30 | Israel had witnessed ten amazing plagues brought against Egypt by God calling for their release. However, at the first sign of difficulty—being trapped between the Sea of Reeds and pharaoh’s army—Israel complained to Moses, <i>“Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the desert-wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert-wilderness.”</i> (Ex. 14:11b–12). God first slowed the army of pharaoh, and then separated them from Israel with a great fog. Then God graciously opened the Sea of Reeds, allowing Israel to pass through <i>dry-shod</i> , and then closed the sea over the approaching army. |
| Ex. 15:22–27 | Israel traveled without water for three days in the desert-wilderness. The first water that they came across was in Marah, and they were bitter. The people grumbled about this to Moses. By throwing a particular tree (or branches from that tree) into the water, the bitterness was neutralized, and the waters of Marah could be drunk. Their next stop provided them with 12 springs and 70 date palms (this represented the 12 tribes of Israel that had their genesis in 70 Jews who moved to Egypt—Gen. 46:26–27). |
| Ex. 15:1–21, 31–36 | 45 days after departing from Egypt, the congregation began to grumble and complain that they were out of food. God provided them the perfect food, manna, and quails to eat. |
| Ex. 15:22–30 | Even with God’s provisions, many individuals continued to rebel. Moses gave the Israelites very specific instructions concerning the collection of manna: collect only enough for one day and collect enough for two days on Friday so that they would not have to collect manna on the Sabbath. Of course, many of them collected too much, and it became spoiled by the next day. And then some did not collect enough on Friday, but, when they went out to find manna on Saturday, there was none. God said, <i>“How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?”</i> (Ex. 15:28b). |
| Ex. 17:1–7 | At Rephidim, the people again lacked water, and they whined and complained to Moses. Again, they accused him of hauling them out to the desert-wilderness to kill them. God guided them to a rock at Horeb where Moses struck the rock, and out from it came water. This was an extremely significant incident, as it spoke of God judging our Lord, the Rock of Israel, and from Him would come living waters. |

| All of Israel's Failures in the Desert-Wilderness; God's Grace and/or Discipline | |
|--|--|
| Scripture | Incident |
| Ex. 32:1–35 | While Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the Law, the people persuaded Aaron to make for them a golden calf to worship. God determined to destroy all of Israel and Moses stood in the gap, as a savior to Israel (as you see, many of these failures resulted in incidents that foreshadowed the coming of our Lord). When Moses returned to the camp, he had to surgically remove those who led in this rebellion against God. |
| Lev. 10:1–2 | In one of the very few narrative portions of the book of Leviticus, the sons of Aaron offered a <i>strange fire</i> to God (I assume that it was simply not in keeping with the rules and regulations that they had received). Because of their high position, God executed them. |
| Num. 11:1–35 | The people complained that they had no meat to eat. God gave them enough quail to eat for a month. However, with the quail came a plague as well, which killed a great many of the people. |
| Num. 13–14 | At the edge of the Land of Promise, Moses sent in 12 spies to look over the land. The idea was to get information on the lay of the land and the people of the land, so that plans of attack could be drawn. When the spies returned, all agreed that the land was everything that God had promised. However, 10 of them said that the people of the land were too big to attack. Their opinion apparently infected all of the congregation, as the people as a whole whined and cried all night because of the giants in the land. They complained that God had not left them in Egypt or that He had not allowed them to die out in the desert wilderness. The consensus was to appoint a new leader and return to Egypt. Again, God offered to destroy all of Israel and begin anew with Moses. Moses pleaded with God, interceding on behalf of the totally undeserving people. What God did do, however, was to kill off the first generation of Israelites, gen X. What would remain is the generation of promise, those who were 20 and younger at the time of the exodus. This is why Israel remained in the desert for an additional 38 years after this. |
| Num. 16:1–50 | Korah, along with two other rebellious leaders, supported by 250 elders, had determined that Moses had been leader long enough, saying, “All the congregation are holy—every one of them; and Jehovah is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves before the assembly of God?” (Num. 16:3b). We have just studied nearly 10 incidents which indicate that Moses was the only reasonable leader of Israel, and that the people were complete and total failures. God opened up the earth and the earth swallowed this hoard of recalcitrants. When the people muttered and complained that the punishment of God was too harsh, a plague was sent out among the people. Again, Moses and Aaron stood in the gap, and halted the plague by making atonement for the people. |
| The previous incidents were the recorded failures of Israel prior to the killing off of gen X; what follows are the failures of the generation of promise; those who, 38 years later, began again their trek toward the Land of Promise. | |
| Num. 20:2–13 | Again, there was a no-water situation, and the people whined and complained. This time, Moses lost his temper, and, instead of speaking to the rock, he hit it twice with his rod. Still, water gushed out for the congregation. |
| Num. 21:4–9 | In their trek back toward the Land of Promise, Israel began again to complain about the lack of food and water (this is after God had provided for them for 40 years). God sent snakes to kill some of the recalcitrants. |

All of Israel’s Failures in the Desert-Wilderness; God’s Grace and/or Discipline

| Scripture | Incident |
|--|---|
| Num. 25:1–18 | Moab and Midian tempted Israel with their women (which also brought with them their gods). Although Phinehas killed two fornicators, and checked the plague, still, 24,000 died. This appeared to be the final plague which killed off any remaining from Gen X, as the next chapter records the census of this new generation. |
| <p>In Num. 20, we have the deaths of Miriam and Aaron, the siblings of Moses, as representative of Gen X (although they were not the spectacular failures that the children of Israel were). In Num. 21 and 25, we have more deaths, which would be the last of Gen X.</p> | |

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

One thing that you need to understand is, the Old Testament is not simply random history written down as various believers saw fit. The Old Testament is given to us for our spiritual growth and to make it clear that God knows the beginning from the end. Throughout history, God has a myriad of purposes. In the Exodus, God’s intent was to portray salvation:

What the Exodus Symbolized

| Person, Thing or Event | What He/It Symbolized |
|--|---|
| <p>Moses, who was the spiritual and political leader of Israel. Through him was the deliverance of the Jews and from him came the Word of God. In order for Israel to enter into the Land of Promise, Moses had to die.</p> | <p>Jesus Christ, the Savior of Mankind. In order for us to be saved, our Lord had to die for us. Salvation is through Him and the Word of God is the Mind of Christ. Even though, Moses died outside the Land of Promise as a result of a mistake which he made, God still uses this as a symbol of our Lord dying for our sins.</p> |
| <p>Egypt. Even though the Jews were enslaved to the Egyptians, many times they longed for the <i>leeks and garlics</i> of Egypt (as opposed to the promise of the <i>milk and honey</i> of Israel).</p> | <p>The world. We are enslaved to the world and to cosmic viewpoint. Even as believers, we sometimes look back at our lives as unbelievers, and desire the leeks and garlic from those times. There are times when we forsake the rewards promised to us, not just in eternity but in time.</p> |
| <p>The Jews. They had believed in Jehovah Elohim, as did the mixed multitude who came with them (these would have been Egyptians and slaves from other nationalities).</p> | <p>Those who have believed in Jesus Christ.</p> |
| <p>Passover. For Passover—and this was done one time only—the blood of a slaughtered lamb was applied to the sides of the door post to the entry of their tents as well as to the top, which made the shape of the cross.</p> | <p>Jesus Christ dying for our sins. Where Jesus bled, from His head, His wrists and His feet, match the blotches of blood made on that first Passover.</p> |

| What the Exodus Symbolized | |
|--|---|
| Person, Thing or Event | What He/It Symbolized |
| <p>Leaving Egypt. After the first Passover, the Jews gathered up their possessions and left Egypt in a hurry. The idea is, salvation takes but a few moments. The Jews made a one-time decision to leave Egypt, which decision stayed with them the rest of their lives, no matter how many times they failed. In fact, despite the tremendous failures of Gen X, they remained outside of Egypt.</p> | <p>Being saved. Salvation is one of the few one-time decisions which we make. We believe in Jesus Christ and we are saved forever. No matter how many times we fail after this point in time, we have been born-again into the family of God. We can never leave this status of salvation.</p> |
| <p>God’s Miracles.</p> | <p>God’s intervention in our lives.</p> |
| <p>Gen X.</p> | <p>Believers who go through their lives as failures.</p> |
| <p>Generation of Promise.</p> | <p>Believers who go through their lives as victors, despite suffering some failure.</p> |
| <p>Walking through the desert. Ideally speaking, Israel was to get the Law and then to go into the Land of Promise and take it. The entire process should have taken a year, which was to symbolize our short lives on this earth. Since some Jews entered into the Land of Promise and some did not, this parallels our own choices in life.</p> | <p>Spiritual growth/life after salvation. Compared to eternity, our life is a drop in the bucket. However, it is important to recognize that some of the Jews walked through the desert and died in the desert; and others walked through the desert into the Land of Promise and enjoyed their lives in Canaan (Joshua and Caleb are examples of this). Our lives in time can be represented either by dying in the desert, angry and frustrated; or living in the Land of Promise.</p> |
| <p>Entering into the Land of Promise. A common mistake which many exegetes³¹ make is, that the Land of Promise refers only to heaven. The Land of Promise is our life with God, in time and in eternity.</p> | <p>Life as a mature believe and eternity spent with God. Ideally speaking, transitioning between these two places, time and eternity, should be seamless. Bear in mind that we have no appreciation for our relationship with God in time apart from doctrine.</p> |

Joe Griffin has made references to this now and again in his series of **Joshua** and I am sure that he has covered roughly this same set of symbols somewhere in his teaching.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

[For] forty years I loathed [that] generation, and I said, “They [are] a people who are going astray [in their] thinking [lit., hearts]; and they have not known My ways.” Bear in mind, this does not simply apply to that evil generation, the Meribah generation, but this applies to us. This is a warning for us not to go astray in our thinking; this is a warning to us not to be ignorant of God’s character, guidance and provisions.

When I swore in My anger [lit., nose], “They will not enter into My rest!” Psalm 95:11 **[Concerning] whom I swore in My wrath, “They will not enter into My rest!”**

Therefore, I swore in My wrath, “They will not enter into My rest!”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

³¹ One example of many is Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 95:10.

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text When I swore in My anger [lit., *nose*], "They will not enter into My rest!"
 Septuagint When I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into My rest.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV In his anger, God told them, "You people will never enter my place of rest."
 Good News Bible (TEV) I was angry and made a solemn promise: 'You will never enter the land where I would have given you rest.' "
The Message Exasperated, I exploded, 'They'll never get where they're headed, never be able to sit down and rest.'"
 New Century Version I was angry and made a promise,
 'They will never enter my rest.' "
 New Life Version I was angry with them and said, "They will never go into My rest."
 New Living Translation So in my anger I took an oath:
 `They will never enter my place of rest.'"
 Revised English Bible Therefore I vowed in my anger,
 'They shall never enter my rest.'

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English And I made an oath in my wrath, that they might not come into my place of rest.
 Easy English (Churchyard) I was so angry that I said,
 "They will never come into my rest".
*God's Word*TM That is why I angrily took this solemn oath: 'They will never enter my place of rest!'"
 JPS (Tanakh) Concerning them I swore in anger,
 "They shall never come to My resting-place!"
 NET Bible® So I made a vow in my anger,
 `They will never enter into the resting place I had set aside for them [Hebrew "my resting place." The promised land of Canaan is here viewed metaphorically as a place of rest for God's people, who are compared to sheep (see v. 7).].'"
 NIRV So when I was angry, I took an oath.
 I said, "They will never enjoy the rest I planned for them."
 NIV – UK So I declared on oath in my anger, They shall never enter my rest.
 Today's NIV So I declared on oath in my anger,
 'They shall never enter my rest.'"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible Wherefore I swore in My wrath that they would not enter My rest [the land of promise].
 MKJV ...to whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest.
 WEB Therefore I swore in my wrath, "They won't enter into my rest."
 Young's Updated LT Where I swore in Mine anger, "If they come in unto My rest—!"

What is the gist of this verse? God made a solemn oath to this generation that they would not enter into His rest.

Psalm 95:11

| Hebrew/Pronunciation | Common English Meanings | Notes/Morphology | BDB and Strong's Numbers |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER] | <i>that, so that, in that; for that, since; which; when, at what time; who, whom; where, wherever; the fact that = how; because that, because; as, like as; yea, even, yea even; until that; then, so [in an apodosis]</i> | relative pronoun | Strong's #834 BDB #81 |
| ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER] is actually used in a number of different ways; it can mean <i>that, so that, in that; for that, since; which; when, at what time; who; where, wherever; the fact that = how; in order that, because that, because; as, like as; yea, even, yea even; until that; then, so [in an apodosis]</i> . | | | |
| shâbaʿ (שָׁבַע) [pronounced shaw ^b -VAHG] | <i>to swear, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath, to take a solemn oath, to swear allegiance</i> | 1 st person singular, Niphal perfect | Strong's #7650 BDB #989 |
| b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}] | <i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i> | a preposition of proximity | No Strong's # BDB #88 |
| ʾaph (אָפ) [pronounced ahf] | <i>nose, nostril, but is also translated face, brow, anger</i> | masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #639 BDB #60 |
| ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced eem] | <i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i> | primarily an hypothetical particle | Strong's #518 BDB #49 |
| The particle ʾîm (אִם) can be used as a demonstrative (<i>lo, behold</i>), an interrogative (usually expecting a negative response and often used with other particles and rhetorically), and as a conditional particle (<i>if, though</i>); an indication of a wish or desire (<i>oh that, if only</i> ; this is a rare usage). | | | |
| When following an oath, either stated or implied, ʾîm, by itself, functions as an emphatic negative. | | | |
| bôwʿ (בֹּוֹא) [pronounced boh] | <i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i> | 3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect | Strong's #935 BDB #97 |
| ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el] | <i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i> | directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) | Strong's #413 BDB #39 |
| m ^e nûwchâh (מְנוּחָה) [pronounced m ^e -noo-KHAH] | <i>rest, resting place, place of rest, quietness</i> | feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix | Strong's #4496 BDB #629 |

Translation: [Concerning] whom I swore in My wrath, “They will not enter into My rest!” This verse begins with the particle of relation ʾăsher, which is usually translated *which, when* or *who*. It also functions as a conjunctive particle, linking the previous with what is to follow, and can be rendered *so that, in that, since, for that, inasmuch as, forasmuch*. So there is no misunderstanding, the word for *swore* does not mean that God uttered some expletives, but that He *solemnly promised* this.

The quote begins with an emphatic negative. *“They will not, under any circumstances, enter into My rest.”* Recall when God had led gen X to the Land of Promise but they refused to go into the land and conquer it, God said to Moses: *“Say, to them, ‘As I live,....your corpses will fall in this wilderness...you will not come into the land in which I swore to settle you...your corpses will fall in this wilderness. Furthermore, your sons will be shepherd for forty years in the wilderness, and they will bear your unfaithfulness, until your corpses are finished in the wilderness...’ I, Y^ehowah, have spoken;...in this wilderness they will be destroyed and there they will die.”* (Selected portions of Num. 14:28–35). *“Not one of these men, this unbelieving generation, will see the good land which I swore to give your fathers.”* (Deut. 1:35).

God’s wrath is, again, an anthropopathism, where a human characteristic is ascribed to God in order to convey spiritual information to us. We cannot make God unhappy; God does not look down on this earth and, every split second, become angry and upset because someone down here is sinning or because some believer is failing. God would become a nervous wreck if, each time someone was out of line, He became angry. *Wrath* is used to add emphasis to His promise: *“They will not enter into my rest!”*

We find this passage quoted over and over again in the Bible:

| “They Will Not Enter into My Rest” An Object Lesson | |
|--|--|
| Scripture | Incident |
| Num. 14:20, 23 | And Jehovah said, I have forgiven according to your word; but they shall not see the land which I have sworn to their fathers. Yea, not one of those scorning Me shall see it. God forgave those who did not trust Him, because of the intercession of Moses, but He would not let them enter into the Land of Promise. |
| Num. 14:28–32 | Say to them, As I live, says Jehovah, as surely as you have spoken in My ears, so I will do to you. Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered sons, as to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, in that you have murmured against Me. You shall certainly not come into the land which I lifted up My hand to cause you to live in it, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. As for your infants, of whom you have said, They shall be a prey, I shall bring them in, and they shall know the land which you have rejected. As for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. God tells Moses to tell the people that the adults would die the sin unto death, but their children, whom they used as an excuse not to believe God, would enter into the land and take it. |
| Deut. 1:33–35 | And Jehovah heard the sound of your words and was angry, and swore, saying, Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see the good land which I have sworn to give to your fathers, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, he shall see it, and I shall give the land on which he has walked to him, and to his sons, because he has fully followed Jehovah. Moses is now speaking to the Generation of Promise, those who were 20 and younger in Num. 14, and he warns them of their parents who went astray in their heart. |
| Heb. 3:10–11 | <i>“Because of this, I was angry with that generation and said, They always go astray in their heart; and they did not know My ways; so I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest.”</i> The writer of Hebrews is telling Hebrew believers in the Church Age that they may still find themselves coming under God’s wrath, as their fathers in the desert wilderness. |

“They Will Not Enter into My Rest” An Object Lesson

| Scripture | Incident |
|---------------------|--|
| Heb. 3:14–19 | <p>For we have become partakers of Christ, if truly we hold the beginning of the assurance firm to the end; as in the saying, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the provocation." Psalm 95:7,8 MT For hearing, some provoked Him, but not all those coming out of Egypt through Moses. But with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with the ones sinning, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did "He swear" "they would not enter into His rest," except to those not obeying? LXX-Psa. 94:11; MT-Psa. 95:11 And we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief. The writer of Hebrews is giving Jewish believers in the Church Age doctrine which is necessary for their spiritual advancement. Chiefly, things have changed. There are to be no more animal sacrifices. Being a partaker of Christ means, they have believed in Jesus Christ. If they have to offer up animal sacrifices for sins, then there is an obvious disconnect, because Jesus Christ forgave them of their sins.</p> |
| Heb. 4:1–5 | <p>Therefore, let us fear lest perhaps a promise having been left to enter into His rest, that any of you may seem to come short. For, indeed, we have had the gospel preached to us, even as they also; but the Word did not profit those hearing it, not having been mixed with faith in the ones who heard. For we, the ones believing, enter into the rest, even as He said, "As I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest," though the works had come into being from the foundation of the world. LXX-Psa. 94:11; MT-Psa. 95:11 For He has spoken somewhere about the seventh day this way, "And God rested from all His works in the seventh day." Gen. 2:2 And in this again, "They shall not enter into My rest." MT-Psalms 95:11 There is a life to lead after being saved; there is a life which must function as unto the Lord after salvation, and part of what is involved are promises made to Church Age believers. These Jewish Church Age believers needed to become oriented to the plan of God in the Church Age, otherwise, there would be no profit from their hearing the Word of God.</p> |

God obviously used this people as an object lesson for thousands of years.

I should add that, the Christian rest is life in phase 2 after gaining some doctrine. Continued growth should, ideally speaking, make for a seamless move from phase 2 (life) into phase 3 (eternity).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The Land of Promise is both literal and spiritual. It was to Israel a real place which God gave to them, a land flowing with milk and honey; a land far removed from their slavery to Egypt; and a land of rest from their wanderings. We all realize that the crusades were wrong; it was a political move totally based upon the misconstruing of Scripture (i.e., the church confused herself with Israel). There is nothing in the land of Israel that we, as Church Age believers, need. We, as believers, are not drawn God to that land to conquer and to dwell in it. However, God’s promise to us is a wonderful walk with Him in time, as well as an eternal rest, freedom from our slavery to sin, a place of great blessing and comfort. God’s promises to us include what He has given to us in our lives here on this earth (much of which we have not received yet) and what He has stored up for us in eternity future. Our walk with God in time begins our entrance into the Land of Promise. Whether we enter into that land is dependent upon our own volition. Do we choose to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2Peter 2:13) or do we return to our whining, complaining ways?

God made many promises to Israel, and we have parallel promises made to us, both for time and for eternity.

| God's Promises | | |
|---|---|--|
| God's Promises to Israel | God's Promises to us in Time | God's Promises to us for Eternity |
| <p>The Israelites, to whom belong the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the worship service and the promises (Rom. 9:4). Therefore, let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day, things which are a mere shadow of what is to come, but the substance belong to Christ (Col. 2:16–17). “Can a woman forget her nursing child, and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.” (Isa. 49:15). For Y^ehowah your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy your nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.” (Deut. 4:31).</p> | <p>We are heirs to a different promise: For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law but through the righteousness of faith...for this reason, it is by faith accordance with grace in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (Rom. 4:13, 16).</p> | <p>Look, I will tell you a mystery: we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will all be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable and this mortal must put on immortality...then it will come to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up because of victory. Oh death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (1Cor. 15:51–53, 54b–55)</p> |
| <p>In the Land of Promise, Israel was to enjoy the Presence of Y^ehowah in the tabernacle. “And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them.” (Ex. 25:8). “Y^ehowah your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies.” (Deut. 23:14a).</p> | <p>In our lives, we are indwelt by Jesus Christ and we have fellowship with Him as filled with the Spirit. For we are the temple of the living God, just as God said, “I will dwell in them and walk among them.” (2Cor. 6:16b–17a Ex. 29:45). Christ in you (Rom. 8:10b).</p> | <p>In eternity, we find ourselves face to face with Jesus Christ. Absent from the body and face to face with the Lord (2Cor. 5:8b). But I am hard-pressed from both, having the desire to depart [from this life] and be with Christ, for that is much preferred (Philip. 1:23).</p> |
| <p>God delivered Israel out of slavery into freedom. “But Y^ehowah has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession, as today.” (Deut. 4:20).</p> | <p>We are delivered out of bondage to the old sin nature in time during the time period that we are in fellowship. For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death (Rom. 8:2). It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery (Gal. 5:1).</p> | <p>We are separated from our old sin nature and completely cleansed from it in eternity. In eternity, we are given freedom. The creation itself also will be set free from slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God (Rom. 8:21).</p> |

| God's Promises | | |
|---|--|---|
| God's Promises to Israel | God's Promises to us in Time | God's Promises to us for Eternity |
| <p>Israel was given manna in the wilderness in order to be sustained (Ex. 16 Deut. 8:3, 16).</p> | <p>We are given logistical grace in time in order to get us to the high ground of spiritual maturity. He Who did not spare His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? (Rom. 8:32). I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor. 1:4–7).</p> | <p>All Christians are given the basic minimum of heaven—a place of no more sorrow, no more tears, the old things have passed away. “They will hunger no more, neither will they thirst any more; neither will the sun beat down upon them, nor will there be any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd and He will guide them to the springs of the water of life and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” (Rev. 7:16–17).</p> |
| <p>Israel was promised a land flowing with milk and honey. “O, Israel, you should listen and take responsibility to do it [to keep His commandments], that it may be well with you and that you may be multiplied greatly, just as Y^ehowah, the God of your fathers, was promised you—a land flowing with milk and honey.” (Deut. 6:3). Israel was given a land with houses and vineyards and things which they did not build. “Then it will come to pass when Y^ehowah your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you will eat and you will be satisfied.” (Deut. 6:10–11).</p> | <p>We are given great blessings in time. Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ (Eph. 1:3).</p> | <p>Our blessings in heaven are beyond description. Heaven is called paradise in 2Cor. 12:2, 4. Jesus Christ...has caused us to be born against to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead—an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and will not decay, reserved in heaven for you (1Peter 1:4b, 4d–5).</p> |

| God's Promises | | |
|---|---|---|
| God's Promises to Israel | God's Promises to us in Time | God's Promises to us for Eternity |
| <p>The Land of Promise was to be a place of God's rest. "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." (Ex. 33:15). "Therefore, it will come to pass when Y^ehowah your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies, in the land which Y^ehowah your God gives you as an inheritance to possess, you will blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." (Deut. 25:19a). "Recall the word which Moses, the servant of Y^ehowah, commanded you, saying, 'Y^ehowah your God gives you rest and will give you this land.'" (Joshua 1:13).</p> | <p>When we are saved, we enter into a rest from our works. We no longer have to do anything to gain God's approval for salvation. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Let us therefore be diligent to enter into that rest, so that no one will fail through the same example of disobedience [as Israel] (Heb. 4:10–11).</p> | <p>In eternity, we enter into an eternal rest. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them." (Rev. 14:13b).</p> |

The point of this chart is to show you that the giving of the land to the Israelites was metaphorical for what was to occur in the future for us in the Church Age. What occurred in the Old Testament was all historically true and what has been promised in the future to Israel will be given to them; however, it also foreshadowed what was to occur.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

As we recall, this Psalm was quoted several times in the book of Hebrews, and it is difficult to determine at what point would I introduce the New Testament quotation of this. The author of the book of Hebrews was certainly writing to the Jews one last time prior to their final dispersion by the Romans and he related what had occurred with the coming and sacrifice of Jesus Christ and compared this to Scripture. His greatest point is that, when God spoke to the reader through the words of this epistle, was for them not to harden their hearts, as did their ancestors in the day of provocation: **Therefore, holy brothers, partakers of a heavenly vocation, consider Jesus, the Apostle and the High Priest of our confession. He was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, as Moses was also appoint in all His house. For He has been counted worth of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house... Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me as in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tried Me by testing Me, and saw My works for forty years. Therefore, I was disgusted with this generation, and I said, 'They always go astray in their heart; and they did not know My ways.' As I swore in My wrath, 'They will not enter into My rest.'" Take care, brothers, so that there should not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart by revolting against the living God, but encourage one another day after day, as long as it is called Today, so that no one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partners of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end; while it is said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me." For who revolted when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they should not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? And so we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. Therefore, let us fear, so that, while a promise remains unclaimed of entering His rest, that no one of you should seem to come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also, but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, "As I swore in My wrath, they will not enter My rest." Although His works had been finished from the foundation of the world. For He has thus said somewhere concerning the seventh, "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works." And again, in this: "They will not enter My rest." Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of**

disobedience. He again fixes a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.” (Heb. 3:1–3, Psalm 95:7–11, 7, 11 Gen. 2:2 Psalm 95:11, 7b–8a).

Chapter Outline

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Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Exegetical Studies in the Psalms

Psalm 95 Addendum

Bullinger sets up an organizational chart for Psalms 95–100:

Bullinger’s Organizational Chart for Psalms 95–100

- A | **Psalm 95:** Exhortation for His people and sheep (vv. 1, 7) “to come before His presence with thanksgiving” (v. 2), for the Lord is great (v. 3). Psalm 95 concludes with a warning of temporal judgment and uses the Meribah Generation as an example.
- B | a | **Psalm 96:** A summons to sing the “New Song” (v. 1), for He is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world in righteousness and the people... (v. 13, the final verse of the psalm).
- b | Psalm 97: The New Song: the Lord reigns (v. 1).
- c | At the end of Psalm 97, God interacts with the saved and unsaved: He delivers the righteousness from the hand of the wicked.
- B | a | Psalm 98: A summons to sing the “New Song” (v. 1), for He is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world in righteousness and the people... (v. 9, the final verse of the psalm).
- b | **Psalm 99:** The New Song: the Lord reigns (v. 1).
- c | At the end of Psalm 98, God interacts with the saved and unsaved: He is forgiving but He judges evil deeds.
- A | Psalm 100: Exhortation for His people and sheep (v. 3) to come before His presence with singing (v. 2), for the Lord is good (v. 5). Psalm 100 concludes with God’s grace and faithfulness.

In the Greek, Psalms 95–99 are all attributed to David (in the Greek, these are actually Psalms 94–98). Psalm 100 (Psalm 99 in the Greek) is simply called a Psalm of Thanksgiving.

There is more to these psalms than simply what we find here, but this is quite interesting that such an organizational chart can be made. Whether this reflects an intention on David’s part, or whether this is God the Holy Spirit working behind the scenes, I cannot say.

From *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 925, edited and added to.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of Psalm 95

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Positive Volition Toward God: Let’s Celebrate and Worship Him

Come, let us sing to Y^ehowah
[and] let us shout out to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before His face in thanksgiving [or,
confession or praise];
we will shout out to Him with a song.

Come, let us sing to Jehovah and let us shout out to
the Rock of our salvation.
Let us go before Him with confession, thanksgiving
and praise;
we will celebrate by singing psalms to Him.

| A Complete Translation of Psalm 95 | |
|--|--|
| A Reasonably Literal Translation | A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase |
| <p>For Y^ehowah [is] a great God [Ê] and [He is] a great King over all gods, in Whose hand [are] the depths of the earth; even mountain peaks [belong] to Him. The sea [is] His, He made it; and His hands formed dry land.</p> | <p>For Jehovah is a great God and He is a great King over all gods. He has authority over the depths of the earth; and even the great mountain peaks belong to Him. The sea, which He made, is His; and He formed dry land with His own hands.</p> |
| <p>Come, let us prostrate ourselves and let us bow down; let us kneel down before Y^ehowah our Maker, for He [is] our Elohim and we [are] the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.</p> | <p>Come, let us prostrate ourselves and let us bow down; let us kneel down before Jehovah our Maker, for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.</p> |
| <p>Negative Volition Toward God: Do not Harden Your Hearts when You Hear His Voice</p> | |
| <p>Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as [was done at] Meribah [strife], or as [was done in] the day of Massah [testing, despair] in the wilderness; when your fathers tested Me [and] scrutinized Me even though they have seen My works</p> | <p>Now, today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as was done at Meribah [or, <i>strife</i>], and as was done in the day of Massah [or, <i>testing</i>, <i>despair</i>] when, in the wilderness, your fathers tested Me and they scrutinized Me; and even though they had seen My works</p> |
| <p>[for] forty years</p> | <p>for forty long years,</p> |
| <p>I loathed [that] generation, and I said, "They [are] a people who are going astray [in their] thinking [lit., <i>hearts</i>]; and they have not known My ways."</p> | <p>I loathed that generation, and I said, "This people continues to go astray in their thinking; furthermore, they have not known My ways."</p> |
| <p>[Concerning] whom I swore in My wrath, "They will not enter into My rest!"</p> | <p>Therefore, I swore in My wrath, "They will not enter into My rest!"</p> |

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Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Exegetical Studies in the Psalms