
Psalm 96

Psalm 96:1–22

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Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			
Psalm 95			

An Introduction to Psalm 96

Introduction: Psalm 96 is one of the psalms sung after the Ark of God had been deposited in the tent set up by David in Jerusalem. This was a part of the celebration, and, if 1Chron. 13, 15–16 are taken as fairly chronological, then this would have been part II of the celebration. Part I is moving the Ark from Obed-Edom’s home to the front gate of Jerusalem (which would have involved singing and celebration—this is 1Chron. 15); and part II would have been the celebration which followed, after the Ark had been successfully placed in its tent. Now, there is the alternative view that, at the end of 1Chron. 16, the original author (not of Chronicles, but of the manuscript which the writer of Chronicles used) wrote down what he recalled from this celebration, which would include songs sung both on the way to the city of Jerusalem and after the Ark had been put in the tent. I am not certain that this is all that important of a point, but I am simply making an attempt to accurately interpret the Word of God without making any unwarranted assumptions. In any case, sometime during the moving and depositing of the Ark, this psalm was sung.

Moving the Ark into Jerusalem was an event which involved great celebration; therefore, we would expect the psalms sung during this time to be celebratory. Psalm 96 is clearly celebratory, where the psalmist calls upon the heavens, the fields, the trees, etc. to rejoice.

In any portion of the Word of God, it does not strike me that celebratory language is enough (Psalm 150 may be an exception to this). I would expect that there would be some *meat*, so to speak. There are going to be two things which stand out in this psalm: *Jesus* will be spoken of by name and the psalmist will speak of the circular orbit of the earth (if you want to see this right now, just go to the **final translation** at the end of this document). When I came across these two things in the Hebrew, I must admit, it knocked my socks off. To prepare you for this, let me explain the writing of the psalmist versus the writing of the Holy Spirit. All Scripture is *God-breathed*, so the writer is breathing in Bible doctrine, and he breathes out Scripture. God the Holy Spirit is the source of divine viewpoint that the human author breathes in, and God the Holy Spirit has an effect upon the end product (i.e., the written Word of God). God the Holy Spirit so supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture that, without waiving their intelligence, their individuality, their personal feelings, their literary style, or any other human

factor of expression, His complete and coherent message to mankind was recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture: the very words bearing the authority of divine authorship.¹

I do not believe that every writer of Scripture fully understood all that they wrote. This does not mean that the authors of Scripture just opened themselves up, and God the Holy Spirit took over their bodies and hands—but there are aspects to Old Testament Scripture in particular, which were not fully understood by the writers themselves. What we find in Psalm 96 is a perfect example of this. One could read and translate this psalm, and never realize that one verse speaks of Jesus by name, and two other verses speak of the orbit of the earth. I do not believe that the psalmist himself knew this. However, as we find many times throughout the Word of God, the Holy Spirit seems to be giving us additional information from meaning-rich passages which even eluded the author. You might say that in many passages, there are layers of meaning, which, with time, become clear. It is like God the Holy Spirit is saying a few things to us through this psalm, and winking, so as to say, “Can you believe that I have inserted this information here?” In my examination of Scripture, I have often come across passages and events which seemed to be somewhat confusing—why are they there, what is being said, why is this important to point out? And, with a little study, all of a sudden, it all makes perfect sense. One example of this is when Saul spoke to Samuel, who was brought back from the dead. I must admit that, there were a number of times when I read this passage or heard it taught where I thought, *what’s up with that?* But, with a little bit of study, and guidance from God the Holy Spirit, when I realized what was going on, my jaw dropped in amazement. So was my experience with this psalm.

There are two more things which are found in this psalm, hidden away. We will find the name YHWH hidden in v. 11; and then we are told twice *He has come!* Although it is common to repeat a verb in order to give great emphasis to the action, it is less common to repeat a phrase. I find it interesting that Jesus is hidden in the 2nd verse, YHWH (one member of the Godhead) is hidden in v. 11; and now in v. 13, it sounds as if Jesus will come to the earth two times (two advents). So, although some might take this to be emphatic, I think the true understanding here is, Jesus will come to the earth on two occasions—first as God’s suffering servant (Isa. 53) and then He will return to judge the earth (Psalm 96:13).

Spurgeon comments on the theme of this psalm: *[Psalm 96] is a grand Missionary Hymn, and it is a wonder that Jews can read it and yet remain exclusive. If blindness in part had not happened unto Israel, they might have seen long ago, and would now see, that their God always had designs of love for all the families of men, and never intended that his grace and his covenant should relate only to the seed of Abraham after the flesh. We do not wonder that the large-hearted David rejoiced and danced before the ark, while he saw in vision all the earth turning from idols to the one living and true God.*²

The NET Bible is even more succinct: *The psalmist summons everyone to praise the Lord, the sovereign creator of the world who preserves and promotes justice in the earth.*³

In 1Chron. 16, we have the first third of Psalm 105 recorded; and a few lines from Psalms 106 and 136; however, nearly all of Psalm 96 will be recorded in 1Chron. 16. We will examine Psalm 96 carefully and in great length herein, and give it a superficial examination in Chronicles.

We should be able to reasonably limit the authorship of this psalm to one of two men: David or Asaph. In a moderately confusing inscription—which is not found in the Hebrew—David is named as the author. David did direct Asaph to put together the songs and choir for this celebration, and Asaph chose this as one of the psalms to be sung. There is no reason to assume that Asaph wrote all of the psalms for this celebration. This all took place—the planning and celebration—in a very short space of time. I suspect that there was maybe a week’s time

¹ Although I took this from <http://www.geocities.com/brainout1/VPI.htm>; I do not know who originally worded this definition of the verbal plenary view of the inspiration of Scripture—I suspect that it may have been Chafer, but these words may even predate him.

² Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 96 introduction.

³ *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 96.

involved in the planning of this event, as the Ark was only kept at Obed-Edom's home for a period of 3 months. During this time, God's blessing had become quite noticeable, so that the Ark was understood to be the source of blessing. It would make little sense for God's blessing to be evident in much less than these 3 months. Someone had to actually observe, from the outside, what was happening on Obed-Edom's ranch, and this observation is what led David to decide to try again to move the Ark of God. Also, David had apparently studied the Word of God in the meantime, and he figured out what went wrong in his first attempt to move the Ark.

Let me back up a bit: David had already tried to move the Ark into Jerusalem, and one faithful man died as a result from an action which obviously was not some sort of calculated evil. The Ark appeared to become jarred and ready to fall, and this man (Uzziah) reached out his hand to steady the Ark, and he died right there on the spot. So David took the Ark to the nearest residence, the home of Obed-Edom, and he studied the Scriptures in order to figure out what to do. After 3 short months, it becomes obvious that Obed-Edom is being blessed by housing the Ark.

So, David tells Asaph to make these preparations to move the Ark, and Asaph does, organizing quite a remarkable celebration where psalms are sung and musical instruments are played.⁴ Asaph may have written some of the psalms and he may have taken some of the psalms out of the ever growing collection of psalms. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that David wrote this psalm, as per the Greek inscription (to be discussed in depth later) or that Asaph himself wrote this psalm (which is less likely, and would contradict the Greek inscription). There is no inscription in the Hebrew and, apart from this psalm being reproduced is almost its entirety in 1Chron. 16, we have no other clues as to its authorship.

I am having a more difficult time than usual summarizing and outlining this particular psalm. We begin with 6 commands in vv. 1–3 and 8 commands in vv. 7–10. The numbers here are unusual. 7 is often related to divine things, but 6 is the number of man. I am not completely certain what the number 8 seems to indicate. Interestingly enough, none of the sources which I refer to have clear outlines either. In all other psalms, I am able to supplement my own outline from 3 to 6 different outlines, which are generally quite prominent. However, in this situation, I found only two clear outlines.

Of these imperatives at the beginning of the psalm, the first 3 are the same; and of the imperatives of the middle of this psalm, the first 3 are the same. The 3rd time *sing* is found, it is followed by the phrase *bless His name*; the 3rd time *ascribe (give)* is used, it is in conjunction with *His name*. After *His name*, we have *Jesus (salvation)* mentioned in the first part; and after *His name* we have *an offering* mentioned. So we apparently have a parallelism being set up, and to associate *salvation (Jesus)* with *an offering*. So we clearly have some parallels here, but they are still not easy to apply an outline to. Essentially, I am thinking out loud here.

In any case, we begin with 6 imperatives in the first 3 verses, which at first deal with singing, but the final two are clearly content filled, where the hearer is enjoined *to tell, to proclaim*. In vv. 3b–6, we are told *why* we ought to proclaim Jehovah Elohim above all other gods. In vv. 7–10, we have 8 more imperatives, ending with very interesting language about the earth and God's judgment of all people (vv. 11–13).

Very few commentators attempted any sort of an outline for this psalm. Keil and Delitzsch write: *The five six-line strophes of the Psalm before us are not to be mistaken. The chronicler has done away with five lines, and thereby disorganized the strophic structure; and one line (Psalm 96:10) he has removed from its position.*⁵ I don't really follow what they are saying, except that, the structure is disorganized.

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge Outline Psalm 96

Scripture	Primary Focus of Section
Psalm 96:1–3	An exhortation to praise God

⁴ Those from the Church of Christ denomination who were in attendance may have felt somewhat offended by all this.

⁵ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Psalm 96 introduction.

Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge Outline Psalm 96

Scripture	Primary Focus of Section
Psalm 96:4–7	An exhortation to praise God for his greatness.
Psalm 96:8–10	An exhortation to praise God for his kingdom
Psalm 96:11–13	An exhortation to praise God for his general judgment

The approach which the Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge takes is, they make the imperatives the 1st section, followed by non-imperatives for the 2nd; followed by imperatives for the 3rd section, followed by non-imperatives for the 4th section. This certainly has as much merit as my outline has, and there are some parallels to be drawn, but they do not seem to continue throughout the entirety of the psalm.

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 96 Introduction.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The NIV Study Bible has even a simpler outline:

The NIV Study Bible Outline of Psalm 96

Scripture	Primary Focus of Section
Psalm 96:1–6	A call to all nations to sing the praise of the Lord.
Psalm 96:7–12	A call to all nations to worship the Lord and to hail throughout the world the glory of His righteous role.

The NIV Study Bible suggests that each section can be further subdivided into two sections.

The NIV Study Bible; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 881 (Footnote).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

When it comes to the outline of this psalm, I don't think that I have done it justice, nor do I find great work done by other scholars either. I have this nagging suspicion that there is a key which unlocks and helps all of this to fit together as it should. David tends to have intricately organized psalms.

Now, despite the lack of a good outline, there is a general pervasive theme in this psalm: the universality of Jehovah Elohim and the fact that the God of the Jews will judge all mankind. This understanding is the basis of this psalm. First of all, this psalm is clearly directed to all the nations (vv. 3, 7, 9–10, 13). Secondly, the true God of all mankind is Jehovah Elohim (vv. 2, 4, 7–10, 13) because the gods of these heathen nations are empty, meaningless idols (vv. 4–5). This is the fundamental thrust of Psalm 96. If you understand this, navigating the psalm is easy.

There is a general pervasive theme in this psalm: the universality of Jehovah Elohim and the fact that the God of the Jews will judge all mankind. This is the fundamental thrust of Psalm 96.

There are remarkable similarities with this psalm and Psalm 95—specifically, the first 6 verses of Psalm 95 and the first 9 verses of this psalm. Being that we find these psalms together, and that the LXX also attributes Psalm 95 to David, it is reasonable that he composed them around the same time. In the latter portion of Psalm 95, David specifically speaks about the Meribah generation—Gen X—and, given that David is moving the Ark after studying the Old Testament (that which is available to him), it is reasonable that he would become

inspired to write about some of the things which he finds in his Old Testament (the books of the Law, Genesis, and perhaps Job, Judges, Joshua, and Ruth).

Let me take these points and put them together.

David is the Author of Psalm 96

1. Psalm 96 is sung to celebrate David moving the Ark of God from the home of Obed-Edom into Jerusalem. Therefore, this psalm was written in a time period consistent with Davidic authorship. 1Chron. 16:23–33
2. The LXX attributes both Psalms 95 and 96 to David. Both psalms are very similar to one another. Psalm 95 is clearly the result of the author knowing the true issues involved in the exodus with the Meribah generation. At the very least, some one at some time, believed that David was the author of this and the previous psalm.
3. This comports quite well with the idea that David, when his first attempt to move the Ark of God failed, went back and read up on the Ark in the Law of God, his Old Testament. We would expect that whatever David writes to reveal a knowledge of Old Testament Scripture, and Psalm 95 clearly shows that.
4. David, being a musical sort, would be inspired to write about what he has read, and what could be more inspiring than the Meribah generation? I say that only partly tongue-in-cheek. I grew up with one particularly bad influence in my life, and I knew from a very early age that, if this person zigged, then I ought to zag. We learn from bad examples. Every believer who examines the life of David ought to recognize that he screwed up about a decade of his life by making some wrong decisions; and this should inform us. But, I digress. What is important is, the similarity between Psalms 95 and 96; their close proximity, and the name of David being affixed to both psalms in the Greek suggests that David is the author.

There is only one aspect of this psalm which suggests other than a Davidic authorship: this psalm is difficult to organize, and David's psalms tend to be extremely well-organized. In fact, they tend to be so carefully organized, that if you miss the key to the organization, then you cannot recognize the organization itself.

Now, just because I don't recognize a careful organization in this psalm does not mean that one does not exist. However, this minor detail has caused several commentators to furrow their brows.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Although I have done a commentary on **Psalm 95**, I wrote it back in 1997, when I was just beginning to write commentary; therefore, it definitely needs to be updated.

Matthew Henry comments about this Psalm: *This psalm is a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles; all the earth will have this new song put into their mouths, will have both cause and be called upon to sing it. The subject-matter of this song is His salvation, the great salvation which was to be brought about by the Lord Jesus; that must be shown forth as the cause of this joy and praise.*⁶

It is fascinating that, Psalm 95 speaks of the negative volition and failure of Israel and that this psalm speaks of the Messiah and evangelizing the Gentiles. This would give the pastor-teacher two different approaches to this psalm: (1) teach these psalms separately, as warranted in Scripture (for instance, Psalm 96 could be read either along side 1Chron. 16 or with the book of Nehemiah) and Psalm 95 after a study of the Pentateuch; or (2) as a pair of psalms taught consecutively, to introduce, for instance, Rom. 9, where, because of the negative volition of Israel, God has gone to the Gentiles. These two psalms illustrate God's change of focus, without necessarily revealing any Church Age mystery doctrine (<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/mystery.html> is a good link which will give you a quick and dirty look at the Mystery Doctrines).

⁶ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:1 (edited).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

This does lead me to a digression: how does the Old Testament relate to the mystery doctrine of the Church Age? The Church Age itself is a mystery to those in the Old Testament—no one saw it coming. The Church Age is rarely mentioned in the gospels (I believe the Upper Room Discourse is the only place where there is any amount of concentrated teaching pertinent to the Church Age).

The Old Testament and the Mystery Doctrines

1. We need to define some basic terms to begin with:
 - a. A dispensation is a period of time seen from the divine perspective. This word actually refers to the administration of a household, and a dispensation tells us how God administers His household here on earth. Like many words of Scripture, this was a secular term appropriated by the Apostle Paul and given a non-secular application. Bob Thieme Jr. did this as well, appropriating such terms as *rebound*, *the Forward Line of Troops*, etc.
 - b. The Age of Israel, which begins with the Patriarchs in Genesis and is suspended (not ended) around the time of the 1st advent of Jesus Christ, and therefore, takes in the bulk of the Old Testament.
 - c. The Church Age follows, beginning at the day of Pentecost after our Lord's ascension into heaven.
 - d. Some theologians (like R. B. Thieme III), speak of the 1st advent of our Lord as a separate dispensation—the Dispensation of the Hypostatic Union. There are portions of Daniel which lay out a specific time table for the Age of Israel, and at some point in time, I need to put that to paper.
2. Paul, throughout his epistles, speaks of *mystery* doctrines. This term *mystery* refers to doctrines which are not known to those outside a Greek fraternity or organization (again, giving a secular term and non-secular meaning). A modern-day equivalent might be the Skull and Crossbones fraternity at Harvard. Those inside the fraternity know the doctrines, rules, regulations, and aims of their organization. Those outside the fraternity do not know these things.
3. These mystery doctrines are doctrines peculiar to the Church Age and not found in any previous dispensation. This would include the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, God the Father and God the Son; the baptism of the Holy Spirit; the filling of the Holy Spirit, and, the biggie: that God is working through an organization different from Israel (i.e., the very existence of the Church Age).
4. These mystery doctrines were not known to believers in the Age of Israel. These mystery doctrines were not even known to the Apostles, for the most part (which is not saying much, as they seemed to understand very little during the 1st Advent).
5. However, in the Upper Room Discourse and in the epistles of Paul (as well as in the other epistles), we have the mystery doctrines of the Church Age laid out.
6. So, I would think that, with Paul's use of the term mystery (μυστήριον), that no one could go to the Old Testament and pontificate on the Church Age or on the doctrines of the Church Age.
7. However, the Church Age was never hidden from Jesus Christ. The Church Age was never hidden from God the Holy Spirit. All members of the Godhead are in on the plan of God the Father. Therefore, we should not be surprised to find passages in the Old Testament which at least give us hints about the coming Church Age. The Holy Spirit knows about all the dispensations; the Holy Spirit understands every doctrine and every mechanic of every period of time. Therefore, it is not inconceivable that there are going to be passages that, *after the fact*, reveal to us that God the Holy Spirit knew about the Church Age and He tells us about it to some limited degree, without betraying the mystery doctrines or the fact of the Church Age itself.
8. Therefore, from the perspective of the Church Age—and taking into account the perspective of those living during the Age of Israel—we may find things within this psalm which at least suggests what is coming.
9. As a general rule, we may expect that no Old Testament is going to give us any specifics about the Church Age nor will it tell us about the doctrines which are peculiar to Church Age believers. However, the Old Testament is written by God the Holy Spirit, as per our definition of the inspiration of Scripture, and since the Holy Spirit knows the entire plan of God, there will be, from time to time, passages which

The Old Testament and the Mystery Doctrines

- reveal that the Holy Spirit knows God's plan in its entirety.
10. I am trying to come up with an illustration of this, and I can come up with two possible ones:
 - a. There is some organization called the *Turtles* with the one cardinal rule that, if someone asks you point blank, "Are you a Turtle?" you must answer "You bet your sweet ass I am." I believe that someone asked Johnny Carson this question, roughly a Millennium ago, on national tv, and he gave the appropriate response. At that time, using that kind of language on national tv was shocking, to say the least. Someone who was not a Turtle would have been nonplused by such a question.
 - b. I am sure that the Skull and Crossbones organization has a secret handshake. If you meet a fellow S and C guy, you might share this handshake. A person who is a S and C member who is about ready to shake hands with someone he thinks is a fellow member, may begin to use the secret handshake, but change to a normal handshake when he sees that person is not responding in that way.
 - c. Apart from these things, you may not realize that this or that person is a Turtle or a member of the S and C organization, but there are things that they might do from time to time which reveal their knowledge of their respective organizations, without revealing any real secrets. This is what we will find from time to time in the Bible. The Holy Spirit knows the end from the beginning, and when we also know some of these things, we can recognize it.
 - d. Two simple examples are, when God clothed Adam and Eve with animal skins, as an unbeliever, we might read this and have no idea what is going on. However, God had to cover their sins, and this was done by the representative sacrifice of an animal. When God had respect for Abel's sacrifice but not for Cain's vegetables, and unbeliever reading this would have no idea why God would seem to be so arbitrary. A believer with doctrine would understand that this is the difference between an animal sacrifice and human works.
 11. So, the deal is this: God the Holy Spirit knows all of human history, from beginning to end. These things may not necessarily be known specifically from the Old Testament, but, when viewing the Old Testament from our period of time, it is obvious that God the Holy Spirit reveals more to us in His Word than even the human author realizes.

Just in case you think I am making this *Turtle* thing up, see <http://ruaturtle.com> Also, I am only guessing about the Skull and Crossbones handshake.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Psalm 96 Inscription

The occasion of this psalm is clear: it was sung the second time that David moved the Ark of God. However, the inscription which is found in the Greek says something about the captivity and the building of the house (the Temple?). Therefore, we need to examine in depth, this inscription which is found in the Greek, but not in the Hebrew.

Right away, with the inscription, we run into problems with Psalm 96. We do not find an inscription in the Hebrew but we find one in the Greek and Latin. Furthermore, the inscription is all about David building his house and it is said to be *after the captivity*, which is somewhat confusing, as we would expect the word *captivity* to refer to those of Judah being taken away to Babylon, which took place several hundred years after the time of David. It might be best just to lay these problems out one by one.

Problems with the Inscription of Psalm 96

1. There is no inscription in the Hebrew, but there is in the Greek and Latin.
2. It is clear that this psalm was sung when David brought the Ark into Jerusalem, based upon the text of 1Chron. 16.

Problems with the Inscription of Psalm 96

3. The Greek text speaks of this being written when David had his house (palace) built.
4. It is possible that we should separate David, the named author, from the building of this house. Perhaps this is speaking of the building of the Temple?
5. The Greek also speaks of this being built in relation to the captivity, which is generally understood to refer to the Babylonian captivity, which takes place 400 years after the time of David.
6. So, we have what appears to be 2 or 3 different time periods associated with this psalm.

So you understand how my mind works, these are observations which I make coming right out of the gate, so to speak. At this point, I have not even a clue whether I can reasonable address these problems. However, intellectual integrity requires me to leave this set of problems here whether I am able to reasonably address them or not. Any pastor who exegetes this psalm should have these things on his mind while doing so.

Based upon just a superficial examination, I have two possible explanations:

- (1) This inscription from the Greek and Latin is just simply wrong and should not be associated with this psalm at all. This solves almost every problem except, *why is it found in the Greek?*
- (2) It is possible that this psalm was associated with 2 or 3 different events in the mind of the Jews, and a scribe, knowing this, noted the two events with which this psalm was associated as sort of a footnote (which is possibly what most or all inscriptions are).

The inscription which follows is found in the Greek, Hebrew, Ethiopic and Arabic.⁷ It is not found in the Masoretic text, and English translations do not mention it.

Slavishly literal:

When the house was being built [or, restored] after the captivity; a song by David.

Psalm
96 Greek
inscription

Moderately literal:

When the house [or, temple] was being built [or restored] after the captivity; a song by David.

A song composed by David when his house was being built after his estrangement. Or, A song composed by David, [later sung] at the restoration of the Temple after the Captivity.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate
Masoretic Text
Septuagint
Syriac

[A canticle for David himself, when the house was built after the captivity.](#)

Not found.

[When the house was built after the Captivity, a Song of David.](#)

[A Psalm of David, a Prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, and of the calling of the Gentiles that believe in Him:...](#) This is according to Gill;⁸ my Peshitta does not have this inscription (my English translation of the Peshitta does not have any inscriptions in it).

Significant differences:

This inscription is not found in the Hebrew at all. The Greek and Latin appear to be identical; the Syriac (which I have assumed is the Peshitta), mentions [the calling of the Gentile believers in Him](#). I do not have this phrase in my English Peshitta.

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.

⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96 introduction.

⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96 introduction.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

None have this inscription.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Apostles' Bible [When the house was built after the Captivity, a Song of 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. The occasion of the psalm is associated with the building or restoration of a house (David's palace?) or of the Temple, and this takes place after the captivity.

Psalm 96 Inscription Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
hóte (ὅτε) [pronounce HOH-the]	<i>when, this which, for this reason, that, because</i>	causal particle	Strong's #3753
ho (ὁ) [pronounced hoh]	<i>the; this, that, these</i>	definite article for a masculine singular noun, nominative case	Strong's #3588
oikos (οἶκος) [pronounced OY-koss]	<i>house, building, palace; metaphorically used for a believer's body; a dwelling place, abode [including a city, country]; metaphorically used for believers in a group [household of God]; metonymically, a household, family; lineage, posterity</i>	masculine singular noun, nominative case	Strong's #3624
oikodomeô (οικοδομέω) [pronounced oy-koh-doh-MEH-oh]	<i>to build (construct, erect) [a house or building]; to restore (rebuild, repair) [a building]; metaphorically used to mean to found, establish, to edify, to build up [a church, individual believers in spiritual growth], to establish, to confirm</i>	3 rd person imperfect middle indicative	Strong's #3618
meta (μετά) [pronounced meht-AH]	<i>after, behind</i>	preposition with the accusative	Strong's #3326

With the accusative, meta implies motion toward the middle or into the midst of something, and also motion after a person or thing, so as to follow and be with a person, or to get a person or thing. Succession can be understood in relation to place (*after, behind*) or with respect to time (*after*).

Quite frankly, this sounds as if this occurs *after* this next word:

Psalm 96 Inscription Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
tên (τήν) [pronounced tayn]	<i>the</i>	feminine singular definite article; accusative case	Strong's #3588 (article, demonstrative pronoun) and #3739 (pronoun)
aichmalōsia (αἰχμαλωσία) [pronounced aheekh-mal-oh-SEE-ah]	<i>captivity; the state of being taken; a captive; the act of taking someone captive by force, prisoners of war</i>	feminine singular noun in the accusative case	Strong's #161

Interestingly enough, while imprisoned, Paul never used this noun to describe himself, but used δέσμιος instead. Kittel speaks of a figurative use of αἰχμαλωσία, but it is somewhat difficult to grasp. He writes *the thought of imprisonment in war is carried over into the inner moral and religious struggle of man and for man; this use is not found in the Old Testament.*⁹

According to Gill, the Syriac reads: [A Psalm of David, a Prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, and of the calling of the Gentiles that believe in Him:...](#) Given what follows, this is a very accurate and remarkable title.

Translation: [When the house](#) [or, temple] [was being built](#) [or restored] [after the captivity](#);... This is putting the cart before the horse, but we do not have verbiage here which indicates that this psalm was written *to David* or *for David*. David did have a house built for him by Hiram the King of Tyre (1Chron. 14:1) and this would have occurred possibly before David brought the Ark into Jerusalem (it is found in that order in both Samuel and Chronicles). This means that this psalm could have been written sometime prior to the moving of the Ark, to celebrate the building of David's palace.

The problematic phrase is *after the captivity*, which would cost most readers to believe that we are speaking of the Temple being restored after Ezra and Nehemiah return from captivity (originally under Babylon) with the small groups of Jews. However, what blows this idea out of the water, is the next phrase where this is [a song by David](#). So, another thought on this is, perhaps this is a reference to David when he was out of the country of Judah and Israel, *in captivity*, as it were. The problem with this theory is, David has been king over Judah for the past 7 years, so it would be hard to see that as being in captivity.

Although I do not know if this final feminine singular noun lends itself to being interpreted *after the exile*, but that would sort of pull things together—again, there is still the problem that David was exiled, but that was at least 7 years prior to taking Jerusalem.

This introduces another theory: although in the text, David appears to have taken Jerusalem *after* becoming king over Judah and Israel (see 2Sam. 5:1–5), perhaps he first took Jerusalem and then was made king over all Israel (the northern and southern kingdoms?). However, by the given text itself, David was still king for 7 and a half years in Hebron over Judah prior to the taking of Jerusalem. In other words, it is difficult to associate David with the word *captivity*. Historically, it just does not hold water.

The end result here is, this inscription is quite difficult to reconcile with the historical events. However, stay with me on this, after we take in the final phrase.

⁹ Kittel, Gerhard, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*; ©1993; Eerdmans' Printing Company; translated by Geoffrey Bromley; Vol. I, p. 196.

Psalm 96 Inscription Text from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
hōdê (ὠδῆ) [pronounced HOH-day]	<i>a song (of praise or thanksgiving), ode</i>	feminine singular noun, nominative case	Strong's #5602
This word is used for songs of believers as well as songs of idolaters. The online Bible, by the way, mis-identifies this word as Strong's #3592.			
tô (τῷ) [pronounced toh]	<i>in the; by the; by means of the</i>	masculine singular definite article; locative, dative, or instrumental case	Strong's #3588
David (Δαυίδ, ó) [pronounced dow-WEED];	transliterated <i>David</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #1138

Translation: ...[a song by David](#). Interestingly enough, there is no way we could make this read *a song to David* or *a song for David*. That would have been the genitive/ablative case. Furthermore, even if we tried to place this psalm somehow with the rebuilding of the Temple after the captivity, we have the problem that, it is clearly sung when David moved the Ark into Jerusalem.

Let's discuss this further: someone, at some point in time, apparently did affix this text to this psalm, and it would have occurred probably in the Hebrew text prior to 300 B.C. (because the Greek LXX was translated between n300–100 B.C.). The text of Samuel was written around 1000 B.C. and the text of Chronicles was composed around 400 B.C. If this is a psalm of David (and our Chronicles text places it during this era), then it also would have been committed to paper around 1000 B.C. Sometime later (this is one theory, by the way), someone added this inscription text to this psalm. There was a captivity which occurred 721 B.C. (the northern kingdom) and the other in 586 B.C. (the southern kingdom). The Jews do not appear to have returned after the first captivity (which is why they are often referred to as the 10 lost tribes of Israel); and some did return after the 2nd captivity, around 516 B.C. This would suggest that someone, for reasons which are not clear to me, affixed these words to Psalm 96, to refer to the return from the Babylonian\Assyrian captivity.

A second theory: someone legitimately added these words to this psalm after 516 B.C. and the reason they did this is, this psalm was sung during the re-building of the temple. So, the song did not originate in this time frame, but was sung during this time frame. David, as author, was given credit. The only problem, and this one is slight, is, *didn't Asaph write this?* Asaph was in charge of getting the musicians and music together for this occasion. There is no reason to assume that he wrote each and every psalm sung on this occasion. That means, in addition to all of the organizing in this area, he would have composed 4 or more psalms. So, it is reasonable to assume that Asaph took from psalms which had already been composed (although it is possible that he composed one or two psalms himself from this group).

This view, that someone simply added these words to the psalm to indicate that it was sung while rebuilding the Temple of God, solves a lot of problems. It explains where the words came from, why they were affixed to this psalm, and how this psalm could have been written by David, yet associated with the rebuilding of the Temple.

This also explains why this line was not carried over into the Masoretic texts. An intelligent scribe read this, seeing the words *captivity* and *David* in the same line, is nonplused. So he locates some older manuscripts to see if this phrase can be found with them. If he comes across any manuscript written prior to 516 B.C., then this phrase would be missing. Applying early textual criticism rules from their day, this phrase would not be carried over on subsequent Jewish manuscripts, which became the basis for the Masoretic texts. However, those who translated the Hebrew into Greek may have been using a manuscript produced after 516 B.C., with this inscription in it, and they ran with it.

What I have attempted to do is to provide a rational explanation as to why this is found in some texts (the Greek and Latin) but not in others; and why we have an inscription which speaks of David and the captivity in the same breath. All of what I have written is simply speculation and nothing more. Furthermore, it has no effect upon any doctrine whatsoever.

My apologies to anyone who is reading this, and comes to the conclusion, *you spent several pages discussing this and now you say, it is really an unimportant matter?* It is the way my mind works. I like to see the pieces of a puzzle fit together. When I run into a problem, I often verbalize that problem before I know the answer to it. The reason for this is, it will take me nearly a month to exegete this psalm, and when I am done, I will have written about 70–100 pages. As I write I will come across questions, so I commit these questions to paper (so to speak) so that I can see them periodically to determine if I answered them or not.

Now, because of this inscription, many have misunderstood or misapplied it. Keil and Delitzsch, for example, write: *By this the LXX correctly interprets the Psalm as a post-exilic song: and the Psalm corresponds throughout to the advance which the mind of Israel has experienced in the Exile concerning its mission in the world.*¹⁰ These are themes which run through this fascinating psalm, and, as I have said, this psalm was probably read/sung during the rebuilding of the Temple after the captivity; but, David probably wrote the psalm and it was definitely sung during the moving of the Ark.

Now, having all of this in mind, recognizing that this psalm speaks of Jesus directly, by name, and that it speaks of the evangelization of the Gentile world, what more apropos event to associate this psalm with, than the moving of the Ark into Jerusalem. This Ark coming into Jerusalem is Jesus coming into Jerusalem at the 1st Advent. At the end of this psalm, after we have covered each verse, I will match the actual event of moving the Ark into Jerusalem with this psalm and with Jesus coming into Jerusalem.¹¹

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Jehovah is Above Every God—He Made the Heavens

Slavishly literal:

**Sing to Y^ehowah a song new;
sing to Y^ehowah, all the earth.**

Psalm
96:1

Moderately literal:

**Sing a new song to Y^ehowah;
O sing to Y^ehowah, all the earth.**

**Sing a new song to Jehovah;
Let all the earth sing a song to Jehovah.**

Here is how others have handled this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

**Sing to Y^ehowah a song new;
sing to Y^ehowah, all the earth.**

Septuagint

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Significant differences:

None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

¹⁰ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Psalm 96 introduction.

¹¹ By the way, just as I write out questions to consider as I study any particular portion of Scripture, I also set up goals to complete. I do not have this comparison laid out in my head. From all that I have read and studied so far, it seems like such a chart could be made. This paragraph simply tells me that, when I complete this psalm, I need to draw some parallels between the psalm and the 1st Advent of Jesus Christ.

CEV Sing a new song to the LORD! Everyone on this earth, sing praises to the LORD,...

Good News Bible (TEV) Sing a new song to the LORD! Sing to the LORD, all the world!

The Message Sing GOD a brand-new song! Earth and everyone in it, sing!

New Life Version Sing to the Lord a new song. Let all the earth sing to the Lord.

New Living Translation Sing a new song to the Lord!
Let the whole earth sing to the Lord!

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English O make a new song to the Lord; let all the earth make melody to the Lord.

NIRV Sing a new song to the Lord.
All you people of the earth, sing to the Lord.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!.

Young's Literal Translation Sing to Jehovah a new song, Sing to Jehovah all the earth.

What is the gist of this verse? The psalmist calls upon us to sing a new song to the Lord.

Psalm 96:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shîyr (שִׁיר) [pronounced sheer]	<i>to sing</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #7891 BDB #1010
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly y ^h oh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
shîyr (שִׁיר) [pronounced sheer]	<i>song, singing; music</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7892 BDB #1010
châdash (שֶׁדָּח) [pronounced khaw-DAWSH]	<i>new, new thing; fresh</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #2319 BDB #294

Interestingly enough, this first part of v. 1 is not found in 1Chron. 16.

Translation: Sing a new song to Y^ehowah;... I must admit that after I translated this line, I thought, haven't I done this psalm before? Psalm 149:1 begins the exact same way. The author of this psalm—either David or Asaph—sat down to write, and these were the first words to be put to paper. At the time, this was a new song to Jehovah.

Barnes comments on the word *new*: *The word new here implies that there was some fresh occasion for celebrating the praises of God; that some event had occurred, or that some truth relating to the*

*divine character had now been made known, which could not well be expressed in any psalm or hymn then in use.*¹²

Henry writes: *A new song is a song for new grace, for those compassions which are new every morning and fail not. A new song is a New Testament song, a song of praise for the new covenant and the precious privileges of that covenant. A new song is a song that shall be ever new, and shall never wax old nor vanish away; it is an everlasting song, that shall never be antiquated or out of date.*¹³

What is quite distinctive about this psalm is the Messianic nature of it and the hidden name of our Lord. It was very apropos to sing such a song to God upon bringing the Ark into Jerusalem. There was to be a spiritual resurgence, at the bringing of the Ark into Jerusalem. I want you to recall the history here. During the reign of Saul, we hear practically nothing about the Tabernacle (semi-permanent Tent) of God, nor do we hear about the Ark or the priesthood. Saul has a close relationship with Samuel, a prophet, and Samuel has some things going on (his school of prophets), but we just don't hear much about this, except when Saul decided to take some liberties and offer up sacrifices himself, not having enough faith that Samuel would show up and do this. This began a rift between Samuel and Saul (all Saul needed to do was to listen to Samuel's instructions).

Saul interacts twice with the priests: once when he calls for them to bring the Ephod of God to him to guide him (not the Ark—1Sam. 14:18); and later, after David goes to the priests in Nob, Saul goes after David and kills all of the priests, save one, who gets away (1Sam. 22).

Now, there was obviously some sort of spiritual activity going on in Israel during Saul's reign, as the priests apparently did have the Tabernacle set up in Nob, but, for all we know, this may have been akin to a monastery, where few show up for services and interaction with the public was minimal (we don't really know here).

However, when David brings the Ark into Jerusalem, this is quite something. This means that the king of Israel recognizes the importance of Israel's spiritual life, and the importance of the Ark (which apparently had not been in the Tabernacle for the entirety of Saul's reign, but kept in storage instead).

If Saul wanted to do something during his reign, he could have united the Ark and the Tabernacle again, but he did not. So, we have a full generation where Israel was out of kilter with her spiritual life. David hoped to begin to solve this by bringing the Ark into Jerusalem. After this, he intended to build a Temple for the Ark, which he did not build.

In any case, this psalm celebrates the bringing of the Ark into Jerusalem, which David had anticipated would be the beginning of a wonderful intermingling of Israel and spiritual things. Hence, he calls for us to sing a new song.

Spurgeon concludes: *The song is for Jehovah alone, the hymns which chanted the praises of Jupiter and Neptune, Vishnoo and Siva are hushed for ever; Bacchanalian shouts are silenced, lascivious sonnets are no more. Unto the one only God all music is to be dedicated. Mourning is over, and the time of the singing of hearts has come. No dismal rites are celebrated, no bloody sacrifices of human beings are presented, no cutting with knives, and outcries of lamentation are presented by deluded rotaries. Joy is in the ascendant, and singing has become the universal expression of love, the fitting voice of reverent adoration. Men are made new creatures, and their song is new also. The names of Baalim are no more on their lips, the wanton music of Ashtaroth ceases; the foolish ditty and the cruel war-song are alike forgotten; the song is holy, heavenly, pure, and pleasant. The Psalmist speaks as if he would lead the strain and be the chief musician, he invites, he incites, he persuades to sacred worship, and cries with all his heart, "O sing to Jehovah a new song."*¹⁴

¹² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:1.

¹³ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:1 (edited).

¹⁴ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 96:1.

Psalm 96:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shîyr (שִׁיר) [pronounced sheer]	<i>to sing</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #7891 BDB #1010
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿerets (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 with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...O sing to Y^ehowah, all the earth. All the earth is called upon to sing a song to Jehovah. Quite obviously, there has always been rebellion in this earth; and within all believers, there is still the ultimate rebel living and tempting us. Perhaps, in some way, we look forward to when God will place all things under His control.

David was also inspired to sing about how the bringing of the Ark into Jerusalem would be a cause for blessing to all the earth, and so he calls upon all the earth to sing to Jehovah. We will find this to be one of the most universal of the psalms, where David saw great import not just to the nation Israel, but to all the world.

Now remember in the introduction, how I said there are parallels between David bringing the Ark into Jerusalem, and our Lord going into Jerusalem for the Passover (where He would be the Passover sacrifice). Our Lord did not just die for a select few on the cross, nor did Jesus die for Israel only, but for all the world. Therefore, this psalm is appropriately to be sung by all the earth.

It is reasonable to assume that what is *new* here is that David calls upon *all the earth* to celebrate Jehovah God. Whatever distinction exists between the Jews and Gentiles appears to be removed, so that all mankind could celebrate our relationship to God. **At that time you Gentiles were without Christ. You were excluded from citizenship in Israel, and the pledges God made in his promise were foreign to you. You had no hope and were in the world without God. But now through Christ Jesus you, who were once far away, have been brought near by the blood of Christ. So He is our peace. In his body he has made Jewish and non-Jewish people one by breaking down the wall of hostility that kept them apart** (Eph. 2:12–14). This psalm will look down the corridors of time, to a time when Gentiles are brought clearly and fully into the plan of God.¹⁵

This is not the only psalm or the only time that it is clearly stated that God speaks of the Gentiles. **Let the peoples thank You, O God; let all the peoples thank You. Oh let the peoples be glad and sing for joy; for You shall judge the peoples uprightly and govern the peoples on earth. Selah. Let the peoples give thanks to You, O God; let all the peoples give thanks to You. The earth has given its increase; God, our own God, shall bless us** (Psalm 67:3–6). **Sing to God, kingdoms of the earth, praises to the Lord** (Psalm 68:32). So throughout the Bible,

¹⁵ Gentiles have always been a part of the plan of God; but God will use us Gentiles specifically to accomplish His purposes.

it is known that God's plan includes the Gentiles, and that through Jehovah, they would be blessed as well. Later in this exegesis, I will give you a long list of verses from the psalms which deal with the Gentiles.

Barnes comments: *All nations. All people had occasion to bless his name; to praise him. What he had done, what he was still doing, was of interest to all lands, and made an appeal to all people to praise him. The psalm is constructed on this supposition, that the occasion for praise referred to was one in which all people were interested; or, in other words, that Yahweh was the true God over all the nations, and that all people should acknowledge him.*¹⁶

And they sang a new song, saying, "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain, and by Your blood You ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 5:9–10). Just as the book of Revelation ties together the new song, our Lord's blood and all nations of the earth, so will this psalm. Psalm 40:3 reads: **He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God: many will see and fear and will trust in the LORD.** The *many* here will be Jews and Gentiles.

**Sing to Y^ehowah,
praise His name,
announce from day to day His deliverance.**

Psalm
96:2

**Sing to Y^ehowah,
praise [or, *celebrate*] His name;
every day, announce [the good news] of His
deliverance [or, *proclaim His Jesus*].**

**Sing to Jehovah and praise His name;
proclaim His salvation [or, *His Jesus*] every single day.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Sing to Y ^e howah, praise His name, announce from day to day His deliverance.
Septuagint	Sing to the Lord, bless his name: proclaim his salvation from day to day.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...sing and praise his name. Day after day announce, "The LORD has saved us!".
Good News Bible (TEV)	Sing to the LORD, and praise him! Proclaim every day the good news that he has saved us.
<i>The Message</i>	Sing to GOD--worship GOD! Shout the news of his victory from sea to sea,...
New Century Version	Sing to the Lord and praise his name; every day tell how he saves us.
New Life Version	Sing to the Lord. Honor His name. Make His saving power known from day to day.
New Living Translation	Sing to the Lord; praise his name. Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Make songs to the Lord, blessing his name; give the good news of his salvation day by day.
Easy English (Churchyard)	Sing to the *LORD and say good things about him!

¹⁶ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:1.

Every day, say that he has made us safe!
 Sing to the LORD! Praise his name! Day after day announce that the LORD saves his people.
 JPS (Tanakh) Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
 proclaim His victory day after day.
 NET Bible® Sing to the LORD! Praise his name!
 Announce every day how he delivers! [Hebrew: "announce from day to day his deliverance"].
 NIRV Sing to the Lord. Praise him.
 Day after day tell about how he saves us.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible Sing to the Lord, bless (affectionately praise) His name; show forth His salvation from day to day.
 LTHB Sing to Jehovah; bless His name, bear news of His salvation day by day.
 NASB Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
 Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day.
 New King James Version Sing to the LORD, bless His name;
 Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.
 NRSV Sing to the LORD, bless his name;
 tell of his salvation from day to day.
 A Voice in the Wilderness Make songs to the Lord, blessing his name; give the good news of his salvation day by day.
 Young's Literal Translation Sing to Jehovah, bless His name, Proclaim from day to day His salvation.

What is the gist of this verse? The psalmist enjoins us again to sing to Jehovah, and then commands us to [daily proclaim His Jesus](#).

Psalm 96:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shîyr (שׂיר) [pronounced sheer]	<i>to sing</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #7891 BDB #1010
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: [Sing to Y^ehowah](#),... The 3rd imperative calls for us to sing to Jehovah once again, and this word *sing* is used for the 3rd time as well. Gill and other suggest that these 3 almost identical commands refer to the Trinity—the co-equal and co-eternal members of the Godhead. Interestingly enough, these triune imperatives occur several times in the psalms: Psalm 103:20–22 118:2–4 135:1 136:1–3.¹⁷

¹⁷ This list came from *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 881 (Footnote).

Psalm 96:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bârak ^e (בָּרַךְ) [pronounced <i>baw-RAHK^e</i>]	<i>invoke God, praise, celebrate, bless [God]; bless [men], invoke blessings; to bless [as God or man] and therefore cause to prosper or make happy; salute anyone [with a blessing]; curse</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Piel imperative	Strong's #1288 BDB #138
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i>]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

Translation: ...praise [or, celebrate] His name;... The writer asks us *to praise, celebrate, bless* Jehovah's name. This is quite remarkable given the imperative which follows. This is God the Holy Spirit winking at us, functioning through the human author, Asaph or David. Now, it is possible that the writer is calling upon us to praise or celebrate Jehovah's reputation and character, but I think that here, *name* is more apropos, particularly given what follows.

Psalm 96:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bâsar (בָּשַׂר) [pronounced <i>baw-SAHR</i>]	<i>to make one cheerful [with good news]; to announce [good news]; to bear glad tidings, to bring good news</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Piel imperative	Strong's #1319 BDB #142
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i>]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article)</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
Literally, this is <i>from day to day</i> ; together, these words may mean <i>every day, each and every day, daily</i> . In Psalm 96:2, this is translated variously as <i>from day to day</i> (most translations), <i>day by day</i> (BBE, LTHB), <i>every day</i> (NET Bible, NCV, GNB), <i>every day</i> (Easy English Bible); <i>day after day</i> (CEV, God's Word™, NIRV, NIV), <i>each day</i> (New Life Bible).			
y ^e shûw'âh (יְשׁוּעָה) [pronounced <i>y^eshoo-GAW</i>]	<i>deliverance, salvation</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3444 BDB #447

Psalm 96:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>This word is transliterated <i>Joshua</i> [<i>Yeshuah</i>]; the Greek equivalent to <i>Joshua</i> is <i>Jesus</i>. <i>Joshua</i> is actually Y^ehōwshûa' (עֹשׂוּהָ) [pronounced y^ehoh-SHOO-ahg']. However, this form, also found in Neh. 8:17, but usually translated <i>Jeshua</i> (see, for instance, Neh. 12:1, 7) is actually closer to the Greek name <i>Jesus</i>. First of all, there is no <i>j</i> in the Greek or the Hebrew. Often, in the Hebrew, their yodh (י = y) is transliterated with a <i>j</i>. The Greek will sometimes transliterate the Hebrew yodh with the Greek iota (ι = i). Secondly, the Greek has no equivalent letter for ה or ו so, when a word ends in either of those letters, the Greeks would transliterate this with an <i>s</i> on the end instead (in our English versions, we are often unaware of this, because, in order to maintain consistency with names, most English versions transliterate these names the same, Old or New Testaments, so that we don't think they are different people). Finally, in the Hebrew, there is the letter sîyn (שׁ = s) and the letter shîyn (שׁ = sh). The Greek transliterates either of these with a sigma (σ or ζ at the end of a word), so <i>Joshua</i> or <i>Jeshua</i> is transliterated <i>Jesus</i>.</p>			

Translation: ...every day, announce [the good news] of His deliverance [or, proclaim His Jesus]. The 5th imperative calls upon us to announce the good news or to proclaim the good news, which we often associate with the gospel in the New Testament (*gospel* literally means *good news*). Proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ is usually thought of as sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with someone or with a group.

Since I originally wrote this, I have found that there is some controversy over the idea that *Jesus* is the Greek equivalent of *Joshua*. Therefore, even though I have explained this above in the Hebrew exegesis, I am going to take it point-by-point below:

Joshua (or Jeshua), in the Greek, is Jesus

1. First thing that I should dispense with is, the name *Joshua* in the book of Joshua is not equivalent to the Greek name *Jesus*.
 - a. *Joshua's* original name was Hōwshêa' (עֹשׂוּהָ) [pronounced hoh-SHAY-ahg'], which means *salvation, deliverance*. Strong's #1954 BDB #448.
 - b. Moses decided to rename him Y^ehōwshûa' (עֹשׂוּהָ) [pronounced y^ehoh-SHOO-ahg'], which means *whose salvation is Y^ehowah* or *Y^ehowah is salvation*. Strong's #3091 BDB #221. Num. 13:16
2. However, there is another form of this name found almost 30 times in the Old Testament, but which is clearly another form of name listed above. **And all the congregation of those who had come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths. For since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day, the sons of Israel had not done so. And there was very great gladness** (Neh. 8:17).
 - a. Yêshûwa' (עֹשׂוּיָ) [pronounced yay-SHOO-ahg'], which means *salvation, deliverance*; and it is transliterated *Joshua* or *Jeshua*. This is a later form of the name *Joshua*. Strong's #3442 BDB #221.
 - b. The form above is equivalent to the Aramaic form, found in Ezra 5:2. Strong's #3443 BDB #1096.
3. This Aramaic form of *Joshua* is essentially equivalent to the word which we are dealing with here: y^eshûw'âh (עֹשׂוּיָ) [pronounced y^eshoo-ĠAW]. The words differ in two vowel points, which vowel points were added hundreds of years after the text was originally laid down. Our word also adds the hê ending.
4. In most English Bibles, we find the name *Joshua* in Acts 7:45 and Heb. 4:8. However, in a few translations, like the KJV, you find *Jesus* in those two passages, because that is the Greek word which is found there. Most later translations fudge a little so that we do not presume that the person named in those two passages is Jesus our Lord.
5. Now lets lay this out letter by letter:
- 6.

Hebrew	English Equivalent	Greek Equivalent	English Equivalent
י	y	ι	I or J
The yodh in the Hebrew (י = y) has no Greek equivalent; so it is often transliterated with an iota (ι = i) in the Greek. Both the yodh and the iota from the Hebrew and Greek are often transliterated with a J in the English when they come at the beginning of a word.			
י׃	y ^e	η	e
We have several forms of e in the Hebrew and two in the Greek. The Hebrew vowel points were added hundreds of years later, indicating a slightly different pronunciation. However, in the original Hebrew text, there is no e here.			
שׁ	sh	σ	s
The Greek only has the h sound at the beginning of a word (called a rough breathing). There is no sh in the Greek. Therefore, when we have a shîyn in the Hebrew (שׁ = sh), it is transliterated by a simple sigma in the Greek (σ = s).			
וּ	ûw	υ	u
There are at least two ways of denoting a u in the Hebrew; and one way in the Greek and English.			
הַע	ʿâh	ς	s
The Greek does not have an h in the middle of a word or at the end of a word. The Greek often adds a sigma (ς) at the end in place of an h. Therefore, Elijah, transliterated from the Hebrew, come out as Elias in the Greek to English transliteration. Now, you are unaware of this stuff because most English translations match up names in the Old and New Testaments so that you do not realize that anything is going on behind the scenes. Some examples follow:			
הֵילֵא	ʿĒlîyâh [pronounced ay-LEE-yaw]; transliterated <i>Elijah</i> .	ἠλίας	Hêlias [pronounced hay-LEE-ass]; transliterated <i>Elijah, Elias; Helias</i> .
1Kings 17–19, 21 2Kings 1–2 3:11 9:36 10:10, 17 2Chron. 21:12 Ezra 10:21 Mal. 4:5		Matt. 11:14 16:14 17:3–4, 17:10–12 27:47, 49 Mark 6:15 8:28 9:4–5, 11–13 15:35–36 Luke 1:17 4:25–26 9:8, 19, 30, 33, 54 John 1:21, 25 Rom. 11:2 James 5:17	
The Hebrew is ʿĒlîyâh (הֵילֵא) [pronounced ay-LEE-yaw] in translated <i>Elijah</i> ; the Greek is Hêlias (ἠλίας) [pronounced hay-LEE-ass], which means <i>my God is Jehovah</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Elijah, Elias; Helias</i> .			

I know it may feel as though I am beating this horse to death; but since this is actually a topic of discussion, I felt the only thing to do is to present this as completely as possible.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

We are to share this good news *every day* (literally, *from day to day*). Perhaps the proper understanding of this phase is, we are to share this good news periodically. We all have different gifts and different predilections. There are some believers in Jehovah who will literally share the gospel with 1–10 people every single day that they are out in public. A friend of my brother's, according to him, is one of the few Christians who can share his faith regularly without being annoying. That has to be a spiritual gift. There are others of us who may share the gospel on the average of once a year.

Now here is what is remarkable: we are mandated to **daily proclaim the good news of His Jeshuah**. In the Hebrew, this means to **daily proclaim His Joshua**; in the Greek, this would be to **daily proclaim the good news of His Jesus**. Now, of course, this also means, **Proclaim each and every day His salvation**. Who or what is our salvation? *Jesus*. That is what this word means. The transliteration of this word in the Hebrew is *Joshua* and the Greek equivalent of *Joshua* is *Jesus*. **Sing to Jehovah, celebrate His name, and proclaim the good news every day of His Jesus**. This is not how a Jew would have understood this verse 3000 years ago, but it is a bonafide translation of this verse, in the light of what God has done by His Son. We find this sort of thing again and again in the Bible; it says one thing at the time it is written (**Sing to Jehovah, celebrate His name, and proclaim the good news every day of His salvation**); and it says something slightly different to us today: **Sing to Jehovah, celebrate His name, and proclaim the good news every day of His Jesus**. God the Holy Spirit knows the entire plan of God the Father. One thing that you cannot help but be impressed by in the Old Testament is how many times it looks forward to Jesus Christ. There are not just a handful of passages whose interpretation is questionable. I have put together a 12 page chart where we examine 6 aspects of our Lord's life and mission, and line up Old and New Testament texts side-by-side, from every section of Scripture (**A Chart of Christ Jesus in the Old and New Testaments**). This is found at: http://kukis.org/Doctrines/Chart_Jesus_Old_New.htm

We find this sort of thing throughout the Old Testament. There are incidents, phrases and verses, which make reasonable sense in their historic setting; but when viewed in the light of the gospel—in the light of God's plan for our salvation—these things take on a new and greater meaning. There are so many incidents which are glossed over by Jewish theologians over the years: God clothing Adam and Eve with an animal skin; God having respect for Abel's sacrifice, but not for Cain's; God's severe discipline to Moses for what appears to be a rather minor act of disobedience (instead of speaking to a rock, he hits it twice with his rod); and God's call to Abraham to sacrifice his son. There are so many Old Testament stories which seem to be fine and dandy in their historic setting, but then when you look at them as the Word of God, which lives and abides forever, and see these stories as authored by God the Holy Spirit, and think of them in light of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, suddenly they take on a whole new meaning. Furthermore, this does not occur just once or twice, but throughout Scripture. Not only do we find clear prophecies of our Lord Jesus Christ in such passages as Isa. 9:6-7; but again and again and again we find narratives that, in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, point toward the gospel of Jesus Christ.

None of this is a stretch; these are the very words used and the very meaning of these words. Furthermore, it is amazing how easily this verse flows into the next: **Sing to Jehovah, celebrate His name, and proclaim the good news every day of His Jesus. Declare His glory among the Gentiles; [declare] His extraordinary acts among the peoples**. In fact, this transition from v. 2 to v. 3 is smoother when we transliterate this word *Jesus* instead of translate it *salvation*.

I must admit I was surprised at the dearth of similar commentary by others, where they appeared to get so close, and yet miss the mark. Gill is typical: *bleſs his name: ſpeak well of Him, Whoſe name is excellent and glorious, ſweet and precious; even every name of His, Jeſus, Immanuel, etc. proclaim him the ever bleſſed God, as He is, as comes before with the bleſſings of goodneſs, and made moſt bleſſed for ever; as Mediator, aſcribe all ſpiritual bleſſings to Him, and bleſs Him for them, and give Him the glory and honour of them. ...ſhow forth his ſalvation from day today; the ſalvation of His people He undertook, and has completed; publiſh that as a piece of good news, as glad tidings; ſo the word uſed ſignifies; even evangelizing, or preaching the Goſpel; for this is the Goſpel, the ſum and ſubſtance of it, ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt: this may be conſidered as directed to miniſters of the Goſpel, whoſe work it is, more peculiarly, to ſhow forth the ſalvation of Chriſt; to point him out as a Saviour to ſenſible ſinners; to declare that this ſalvation is done, is wrought out for ſinners, is full and complete; is to be had freely, and to be had now; and this is to be done.*¹⁸

I have no idea why, but I have become fascinated with the Old Testament and have done 95% of my work in the Old Testament (and 99% of the exegesis which I do); and it amazes me how many times the Old Testament looks

¹⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:2 (slightly edited). To be fair, I am certain that Gill had in his mind to complete a commentary on the entire Bible, which demanded that he move things along. Furthermore, I have a lot more resources than what he had and it is much easier for me to access these resources. As a personal note, given all that has happened in my life, it is hard for me to imagine a different time or place for me to be.

forward thousands of years and tells us about Who and What Jesus is, and what God plans to do. The more that I study the Old Testament, the more and more I am convinced that this is the Word of God.

Barnes suggests that perhaps there was some deliverance which occurred at this time, and perhaps that is what David is referring to. I certainly grant that is a possibility; but bear in mind that, we have no historical incidents to corroborate this with. I have no doubts that David is speaking here either of a temporal deliverance which took place in his life (perhaps when he took Jerusalem) or that He is speaking of the ultimate salvation of God, our redemption from sin and death. However, God the Holy Spirit has not seen fit to preserve this incident, but He has instead associated this psalm with the bringing of the Ark—which represents Jesus Christ—into Jerusalem.

Since this song is sung after the Ark has been placed in its tent in Jerusalem, and since this psalm flat out says, [Proclaim the good news of His Jesus every day](#), it might be helpful to summarize what we know about the Ark of God.

Summary Points on the Ark of God

1. The Ark of God was one of the pieces of furniture of the Tent of Meeting which represented the God-man, Christ Jesus.
2. It was built out of Acacia wood (which represented Christ's humanity) and overlaid with gold (which represented His Deity).
3. Inside the Ark were three items: (1) the tablets of the Law, representing God's perfect standards and our inability to reach these standards; (2) a golden pot of manna, representing God's perfect provision for us (manna was a perfect food); and (3) Aaron's rod which budded, which represents the resurrection from the dead (the rod was a dead staff on which buds came forth).
4. On the Ark was a mercy seat and on both sides of the mercy seat were two angels, or cherubim. The mercy seat represents our point of contact with God (which is upon the Ark itself, above the three items mentioned); and the cherubim represent the angelic conflict, of which we are a part.
 - a. The Angelic Conflict refers to the fact that we are a part of an unseen conflict.
 - b. Our very actions are being observed and even discussed in heaven by elect and fallen angels.
5. The Ark was kept in the Holy of Holies, which was a room inside the Tent of Meeting. Only the High Priest went into this room once a year on the Day of Atonement to sprinkle blood upon the mercy seat, which represents the blood of our Savior for our sins.
6. Because the Ark was kept in the Holy of Holies, it was not seen by the Israelites as Christ had not come yet. The Ark was a shadow image of the Christ to come, and the most exact image of God of the Tabernacle furniture.

These summary points are taken from <http://kukis.org/Doctrines/ArkCovenant.htm>

Chapter Outline

**Recount in Gentiles His glory;
in all the peoples His wonderful works;...**

Psalm
96:3

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

**Declare His glory among the Gentiles;
[declare] His extraordinary acts among the
peoples;...**

**Declare aloud His glory among the Gentiles;
and declare aloud His extraordinary acts among the peoples;...**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

Recount in Gentiles His glory;
in all the peoples His wonderful works.

Septuagint Publish his glory among the Gentiles, his wonderful works among all people..

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Tell every nation on earth, "The LORD is wonderful and does marvelous things!
 Good News Bible (TEV) Proclaim his glory to the nations, his mighty deeds to all peoples.
 The Message Take the news of his glory to the lost, News of his wonders to one and all!
 New Century Version Tell the nations of his glory;
 tell all peoples the miracles he does,.
 New Life Version Tell of His shining-greatness among the nations. Tell of His wonderful works among
 all the people.
 New Living Translation Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.
 Tell everyone about the amazing things he does.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English Make clear his glory to the nations, and his wonders to all the peoples.
 God's Word™ Tell people about his glory. Tell all the nations about his miracles.
 NET Bible© Tell the nations about his splendor!
 Tell [The verb "tell" is understood by ellipsis (note the preceding line)] all the nations
 about his amazing deeds!
 NIRV Tell the nations about his glory.
 Tell all people about the wonderful things he has done.
 The Scriptures 1998 Declare His esteem among the nations, His wonders among all peoples.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB Tell of His glory among the nations,
 His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.
 WEB Declare his glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples.
 Young's Literal Translation Declare among nations His honour, Among all the peoples His wonders.

What is the gist of this verse? The psalmist enjoins his listeners to declare God's glory and deeds to all nations and peoples.

Psalm 96:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
çâphar (סַפַּר) [pronounced saw-FAHR]	<i>to recount, to enumerate, to tell with praise, to celebrate, to recall, to declare, to narrate, to tell or declare something from memory, to declare the facts or particulars of, to tell in a specific order</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Piel imperative	Strong's #5608 BDB #707
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

Psalm 96:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gôwyîm (גוֹיִם) [pronounced <i>goh-YEEM</i>]	<i>Gentiles, [Gentile] nation, people, peoples, nations</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1471 BDB #156
kâbôwd (כְּבוֹד) [pronounced <i>kaw^b-VODE</i>]	<i>glory, abundance, honor</i>	masculine singular adjective which sometimes acts as a noun; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3519 BDB #458

Owen calls this a masculine singular noun.

Translation: [Declare His glory among the Gentiles;...](#) Whose glory are we speaking of here? We could certainly say that this refers to God the Father; but recall the previous verse where we were to speak of His Jesus every day—so this more reasonably refers to Jesus Christ. Whether we understand the previous verse to speak of Jehovah Elohim the Son and His salvation, or of Jehovah Elohim the Father and His Jesus, this verse would still refer back to Jesus Christ rather than to God the Father. Now, in the Old Testament, they would not necessarily make this distinction, so to them, they would be declaring the glory of the God Who led the Jews out of Egypt and established them in the Land of Promise. This is the revealed member of the Godhead, so we are still speaking of Jesus Christ, whether we view this from an Old or New Testament perspective. However, in the Old Testament, despite the many clues as to the existence of the Trinity, the Trinity was not an understood doctrine, even to saved Jews.

We might call our Lord's glory His celebrityship, as He is the only true celebrity. Just as you might talk about some celebrity and who they are marrying or divorcing, or what movie they are acting in, or whose talk show they are going to be on, so much greater is Christ Jesus, Who has saved all mankind. Making Him known is one of the first steps in a person's salvation—after all, you cannot believe in someone you have not heard about. So, declaring His glory is telling the world about the character and person and sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Again, we should always see the psalm both from our perspective and from the perspective of David. It was not necessarily as perspicuous to Old Testament believers as to what God would do. They did not fully understand our Lord going to the cross. They understood clearly that their God—the God of Israel—is the God of all mankind, the God Who created us and this universe. They also understood that blood sacrifices were required by this God in order to atone for (cover) their sins. God the Holy Spirit took whatever was necessary from what was revealed to them so that their trust in the God of Israel was sufficient to save them, just as our trust in Jesus is sufficient to save us, even though we may not grasp atonement, redemption, propitiation or much else about Soteriology. When we come to the cross, we have minimal information about the Person of Jesus Christ and what He has done for us. God the Holy Spirit reveals enough to us, that we go on positive signals when we hear the gospel. For Jews and Gentiles in the Old Testament, it was the same thing. Enough was revealed to the Old Testament person so that they would choose to believe in the God of Israel; they would choose to trust in the God of Israel. In this verse, His glory is to be declared among the Gentiles.

Those to whom our Lord's glory is to be declared, are the Gentiles (peoples, nations). I am sure you have seen this word transliterated: *goy*. Here, it is *Goiim*, which is plural. This is clearly a Messianic psalm aimed toward the Gentiles. God reaches out to the Gentiles in various ways, and we have examples of this through the Queen of Sheba and Jonah. However, in no way should we understand these as the sum total of Gentile evangelism. They are examples. Again and again in various lists—e.g., David's mighty men—we have many Gentiles mentioned (Uriah the Hittite, for example). In the line of Christ, we find Gentiles, e.g. as Ruth the Moabite. We know how God instructed Jonah to evangelize the Assyrians, a people he despised; and it is reasonable to assume that God, from time to time, moved other men to evangelize other groups of Gentiles.

Now, because Gentile evangelism was not codified in the Law, these words must have surprised the Jews, who gathered together for this national, religious celebration, and they hear the Levites sing loudly, **Declare our Lord's glory to the Gentiles**. Some may have understood this and some may not have; but it is like any other doctrine which is a part of the Christian life—some believers understand it and most do not. I should point out that this is not a rare thing; we find similar statements in Psalm 2:8 9:1, 8, 11 18:43, 49 22:27–28 46:10 57:9 59:5 67:2 72:17 82:8 86:9 97:1 98:2 100:1 102:15 103:8 117:1. We will look at some of these verses shortly when we examine **Gentile Evangelism in the Old Testament** and later in the short doctrine **Old Testament Calls to Evangelize the Gentiles**.

There is one more thing that I should deal with, and that is the preposition in this verse: we do not have the *lâmed* preposition, which means *to, for*; we have the *bêyth* preposition instead, which indicates that they should declare our Lord's glory *among* or *within* the Gentiles. This does not mean that the Jews are sandwiched between Gentile nations, and in their own nation, they are to glorify God (that would be *in the midst of*, a slightly different phrase); but they are to proclaim the Lord's glory *among* or *within* the Gentiles, which essentially evokes the image of an evangelist.

This is also very accurate from a theological stance. I've given the gospel out a few times, and I am sure that, for some, it did not penetrate their skulls. This is the nature of the gospel. God the Holy Spirit must make the gospel clear and perspicuous to the hearer. Sometimes God does this, and the gospel stays with a person for a long time until they believe; I've known one person who believed in Jesus Christ like this. There are others who, God speaks to, they hear the gospel, yet they neglect to believe, and it disappears from their thinking until they hear it again. Then there are others who, for whatever reason—intense negative volition, lots of scar tissue—that they hear the words and it never penetrates their skull.

Personally, I never heard or understood the gospel until age 21. If I heard it prior to this time, then it either did not penetrate my mind or if it did, I forgot about it, because when I first read the gospel, and understood the mechanics, it was a new thing to my mind.

My point in all of this is, I heard the evangelic message of God's grace at various times, I am sure—I am certain that I heard Billy Graham on television and I did go to a Baptist Vacation Bible School one year—but I don't know that it ever penetrated my soul. Whatever I heard, it either did not penetrate my soul or I simply forgot about it. If I heard the gospel in my earlier years, I certainly do not recall it. The gospel may have been proclaimed among me and other Gentiles, but not necessarily to me, as I have no such recollection.

And since I am on this topic, then I should bring in parable of Jesus which speaks to this same thing:

A Brief Explanation of Matthew 13:3–23

And He spoke to them many things in parables, saying: Behold, the sower went out to sow. This will have two applications: someone who is teaching correct doctrine to believers and an evangelist teaching the gospel. And in his sowing, some fell by the roadside, and the birds came and ate them. An evangelist may spread the gospel, but some just will not heard it, and before it sinks in, their memory of the gospel fades away. And other fell on the stony places where they did not have much earth, and it immediately sprang up because it had no deepness of earth. Here someone hears the gospel, understands it and believes. However, they do not pursue God's Word; they do not learn doctrine. They might even be quite enthusiastic, which seems to be what is implied here—it immediately springs up—but you need doctrine in your soul to function in the Christian life. And the sun rising, it was scorched; and because of having no root, it was dried up. Such a person ends up imitating the unbeliever. Now, they may imitate a religious unbeliever or they may leave the religious stuff behind; but there is no production to come out of their salvation. You can lay seed down in a cardboard box and keep that box moist, and some of these seeds will not only sprout, but they will send up a shoot which may grow to several inches tall; but, because there is no depth of soil for the seed—no nourishment—that shoot will wither and die. And other fell on the thorn-bushes, and the thorn-bushes grew up and choked them. One of the things which happens is, we have very busy, active lives, and when we hear the gospel, we might respond, but the cares of the world just choke out the Word of God. They may begin going to church, but they have all of these

A Brief Explanation of Matthew 13:3–23

other activities going on, so they can't, in any way, make it to Bible class, because they have things going on that night. And then, this or that happens, which means that they lose a Sunday here or there; and, eventually, their relationship to the Word of God is choked out by all the other activities in their lives. **And other fell on the good ground and yielded fruit; indeed, one a hundredfold, and one sixty, and one thirty.** Some will hear the gospel and believe; and they will grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they will, therefore, produce divine good. **The one having ears to hear, let him hear.** Not everyone who hears spiritual information is able to take it in. Some can hear this parable and understand what our Lord is saying; and for others, it goes over their heads.

Matt. 13:10–15: **And coming near, the disciples said to Him, Why do You speak to them in parables?** Probably the disciples of Jesus did not understand what He was saying and they themselves were wondering, *seeds popping up? Sprouts dying? What the hell is He talking about?* But they don't want to seem like complete Doofus's, so indicate that they are concerned about what other people think and how these other people might not understand what is being said. **And answering, He said to them, Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but it has not been given to those.** Eventually, the disciples would catch on; they would eventually understand Bible doctrine; they would eventually figure out what Jesus was saying to them. Most of the time, they seemed to not even have a clue. **For whoever has, to him will be given, and he will have overabundance. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.** We have to inhale the OC which is given us. This begins with the gospel and it continues. What Jesus taught in parables was doctrinal information, and when we take in His Word, we are able to take in more and more. You build doctrinal understanding upon doctrine. You do not walk into the Christian life one day, and understand everything the next. I have been a believer for over 30 years, and I just started to go back and re-do the Thieme 1969 Basic series and it is wonderful. There is so much information to be found here. I don't know how much I got out of it originally (I did thoroughly enjoy the series), but I feel like I am getting everything now, and it is quite informative. **Because of this, I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.** Jesus spoke in parables for a number of reasons, and one is simply to fulfill prophecy. **And the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled on them, which says, "In hearing you will hear and in no way understand, and seeing you will see yet in no way perceive. For the heart of this people has grown fat, and they heard heavily with the ears, and they have closed their eyes, that they not see with the eyes, or hear with the ears, and understand with the heart, and be converted, and I heal them."** (Isa. 6:9, 10).

Matt. 13:16–17: **But your eyes are blessed because they see; and your ears because they hear. For truly I tell you that many prophets and righteous ones desired to see what you see and did not see, and to hear what you hear and did not hear.** The disciples never quite got it; here, they were speaking to God in the flesh; God spoke to them. The very words they heard were from God. It never quite fit into their brains. They are hearing what believers in past dispensations had so desired to hear.

Then our Lord explains His parable. Matt. 13:18–23: **Then hear the parable of the sower: Everyone hearing the Word of the kingdom, and not understanding, then the evil one comes and catches away that which was sown in his heart. This is that sown by the roadside.** Some people hear the Word of God and some people hear the gospel, but it simply does not compute. We find out later that God the Holy Spirit makes this information real to us, and then we can choose how to react. However, there is also the fact that, even after we hear and understand the gospel, some of us reject it, and it leaves our thinking. The evil one comes and takes it away from our heart (this is metaphorical, by the way). **And that sown on the stony places is this: the one hearing the Word, and immediately receiving it with joy, but has no root in himself, but is temporary, and tribulation, or persecution occurring because of the Word, he is at once offended.** People do believe in Jesus Christ and are saved, but nothing else takes root. They have no interest in God's Word. The most surprising thing to me as a new believer, once I discovered doctrine was, how few believers had any interest in the Word of God. They were willing to put their time in at some church, but they did not have any real interest in God's Word. In that situation, what can happen? At best, they live out most of their life, mostly out of fellowship, and never grasping any real spiritual truth. **And that sown into the thorn bushes is this: the one hearing the Word, and the anxiety of this age, and the deceit of riches, choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful.** The details of life get too much in the way of some. They believe in Jesus Christ and they might even take in a little doctrine, but all that goes

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on in their lives overwhelms their spirituality. **But that sown on the good ground is this: the one hearing the Word, and understanding it, who indeed bears and yields fruit, one truly a hundredfold, and one sixty, and one thirty.** Those who hear the gospel and believe, and then learn the Word of God, grow spiritual, and they produce.

Again, the gospel is not the complete set of soteriological doctrines. No one at gospel hearing, gets a full run down of atonement, expiation, forgiveness, justification, propitiation, reconciliation, redemption and the vicarious nature of our Lord’s death. We hear a bare minimal snippet of some aspect of one of these doctrines, and then we are told, believe in Jesus Christ, and you will be saved; if you do not put your trust in Him, then you have chosen to be under God’s condemnation.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Psalm 96:3b

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
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong’s #3605 BDB #481
‘ammîym (עַמִּים) [pronounced gahm-MEEM]	<i>peoples, nations; tribes [of Israel]; relatives of anyone</i>	masculine plural collective noun with the definite article	Strong’s #5971 BDB #766
pâlâ’ (פִּלְאוֹ) [pronounced paw-LAW]	<i>things done wonderfully; therefore, incredible works, miracles, extraordinary acts</i>	feminine plural, Niphal participle with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #6381 BDB #810

Translation:...[\[declare\] His extraordinary acts among the peoples;...](#) God’s deliverance of Israel was spectacular. His taking them from Egypt through the desert and into Israel, and giving them the land was quite amazing. Throughout their history, God has been there closely involved with His people the Jews. So they are to declare these acts to all the peoples (we carry over the verb from the previous sentence).

The plural nouns used here and in v. 3a—the Gentiles and the nations—clearly suggests that the psalmist is declaring God’s works and glory outside of the nation Israel. Again, this implies that there was some evangelism which the Jews did outside of Israel. This is not a topic which the Old Testament spends much time with. There are clear instances of the evangelization of Gentiles, as with the Queen of Sheba or with Jonah going to Nineveh; but the primary focus of the Old Testament is upon God’s relationship with Israel. Now, we have clear hints of Old Testament evangelism in psalms (I have already given a long list of Scriptures from the psalms). However, I do not recall Gentile evangelism to be codified within the Mosaic Law.

On this topic, we do not know what occurred far outside of nation Israel—who believed in Jesus Christ and was saved from lands far away. However, Noah only had 3 sons, and they no doubt passed along what amounted to the gospel to their sons, and so on. Almost every culture has some sort of history or legend of a huge flood; so if this was carried on down through the ages, the God of Adam must have also been known to many as well. In

any case, we know that God is fair and that He provides the gospel for anyone who expresses positive volition toward Him.

I have not personally covered the **Doctrine of Heathenism**, which is involved here; but here are some links to this doctrine:

Links to the Doctrine of Heathenism

<http://www.aliveandpowerful.com/doctrines/pdf/Heathenism.PDF>

<http://www.spokanebiblechurch.com/study/Bible%20Doctrines/heathenism.html>

<http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/heathen.html>

The basic principle is quite simple: we reach God consciousness sometime between the ages of 4 and 21. This means that we have some limited understanding of the concept of God. At that point, we can go on positive or negative signals—we can have an interest in Who He is or not. God will then reveal to such a one the gospel of Jesus Christ in some way (primarily through evangelism, but this could be by the written word as well).

It is important to understand that God is under no moral obligation to provide the gospel to someone who would reject the gospel. God knows our every thought and decision and certainly knows how we would react to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Since we are on the topic, it might be worthwhile to note where Gentile evangelism took place in the Old Testament or is mentioned.

Gentile Evangelism in the Old Testament

Scripture	Incident
<p>Gen. 7–11 Job 1–42</p>	<p>Prior to the patriarchs, we are given only a few clues as to how people were evangelized. There appears to have been some sort of a priesthood and no doubt, the gospel was passed down from father to son for many generations. The book of Job clearly indicates that, before the Law, there was some fundamental understanding of God (in fact, a great deal more understanding about Who and What God is than we have now).</p>
<p>Ex. 20:10 Lev. 16:29 18:26 19:10, 33–34 23:22 24:16 25:35, 47 Num. 9:14 15:14–16, 26 19:10 Deut. 5:14</p>	<p>Israel had a very liberal immigration policy. If someone wanted to move to Israel, the Israelites were to treat them with the same respect and laws as the Jews themselves were under. These immigrants were also to be subject to the same ceremonial laws as the Jews were under.</p> <p>The passages listed are only a representative few of those which could have been listed.</p>
<p>Deut. 20:10–12</p>	<p>When Joshua came into the land to take it, they were to offer peace and subjugation to each city before taking it.</p>
<p>Joshua 2 6:25 Matt. 1:5</p>	<p>Rahab the prostitute understood that Joshua and the invading Jews were an irresistible force because of their God. In this way, she was evangelized, and submitted to the requests of Joshua, saving her entire family (compare Acts 16:31). She is apparently in the line of Joseph, the legal father of Jesus. By application she would also be in the line of Mary, the mother of Jesus (but not mentioned by name in Luke 3).</p>

Gentile Evangelism in the Old Testament	
Scripture	Incident
Joshua 9	When Joshua invaded the Land of Promise, it was clear to the Gibeonites that the God of the Jews would defeat them. This indicates that many if not all of them believed in the God of the Jews. So, by deception, they got Joshua to accept them without killing them. Although this is obviously not God's preferred method of responding to evangelism (they believed in Jehovah Elohim, but they went about deceiving Joshua in order to be spared).
Ruth Matt. 1:5	Ruth the Moabite married an Israeli man who had moved to Moab. Although she lost her husband, she and her Jewish mother-in-law moved from Moab to Israel. She obviously believed in the God of the Jews, and was in the line of both Joseph and Mary (and, therefore, in the line of Jesus).
2Sam. 23:39 1Chron. 11:46	David's mighty men included Uriah the Hittite and Ithmah the Moabite. This indicates that men immigrated to Israel, and it is reasonable to suppose the most of them were evangelized, which is why God moved them there in the first place.
Psalm 22:27-28	All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn back to Jehovah; and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the kingdom is Jehovah's; and He is the ruler among the nations. It has been long-understood that Jehovah God, the God of the Jews, is the God of all mankind.
Psalm 96:2-5	Sing to Jehovah; bless His name, bear news of His salvation [Jesus] day by day. Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonders among all people. For Jehovah is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols; but Jehovah made the heavens. These are imperatives which require the hearer to tell of Jehovah throughout all the nations.
Psalm 117:1-2	Praise Jehovah, all nations; praise Him, all peoples; for His mercy is mighty over us, and the truth of Jehovah is forever. Praise Jehovah! This is the entirety of Psalm 117, so that Jehovah's universality is not a minor footnote, but an important doctrine of the Old Testament.
Jonah 1-4	Although Jonah hated the Assyrians, God convinced him to evangelize the Assyrians, which is the book of Jonah. This suggests to us that God, on occasion, would send out specific missionaries from Israel to cities outside of Israel.
Isa. 49:5-7	And now, says Jehovah who formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob back to Him: Though Israel is not gathered, yet I am honored in the eye of Jehovah, and My God is My strength. And He said, It is too little that You should be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You for a light of the nations, that You may be My salvation [Jesus] to the end of the earth. So says Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, His Holy One, to the despised of soul, to the hated of the nation, the servant of rulers, Kings shall see and rise up; and chiefs shall worship; because of Jehovah who is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel; and He chose You. Old Testament believers knew that the coming Messiah would be a light to all nations to God's salvation.

Gentile Evangelism in the Old Testament	
Scripture	Incident
Daniel 4:1–3	Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, the nations, and the tongues that dwell in all the earth: Your peace be multiplied. It seemed good before me to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done with me. How great are His signs! And how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His rule is from generation to generation. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, was given the gospel by Daniel while ruling over the dispersed Jews.
Daniel 6	Darius king of Persia was also evangelized by Daniel.
Micah 4:1–3	But it shall be in the end of the days, the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established on the top of the mountains; and it shall be lifted up from the hills; and peoples shall flow on it. And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach us from His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For the Law shall go forth out of Zion, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between many peoples, and will decide for strong nations afar off. And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, nor shall they learn war still. That Jehovah of the Jews would eventually rule over all mankind was a doctrine presented in the Old Testament. See Zech. 9:10.

This is a brief outline and deserves to be made into a full-fledged doctrine (i.e., I need to go back and expand on all of these points).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

God acted in the ancient world in such a way as to cause a wave of news to spread throughout the ancient world. People with doctrine are herein charged with the responsibility of recounting God's works to others.

Let's talk about this evangelism thing and our function in the plan of God in general. I know people on welfare. They sit at home, they smoke cigarettes, they watch tv all day long, and they get various things from our government. They will never be rich; they will never have financial independence; they will never be in a position to buy anything that they want. They are stuck where they are. I have no idea what goes on in their minds, but our government has essentially subsidized them into just the right amount of poverty. They get enough money for their basic needs, and enough money to preclude them getting an education or a job. Their existence is not a great one; it is basic subsistence. God is not looking to subsidize welfare recipients. God is not looking to have people who simply sit on their butts all day waiting for the next check. This is not a matter of paying God back or trying to get on God's good side, or trying to earn a little grace from God—this is a matter of normal human function. Most of us, when we put in a hard day's work, and it is somewhat successful, we often experience a moderate level of satisfaction. When I am able to figure out how to do something and I do it and it comes out right, even if I am exhausted, I have a good feeling about it. Our work on this earth involves the salvation of people; people who will enter into God's rest based upon some of the things that we do and say. Our walk on this life may affect someone so that they choose to learn the Word of God and become spiritually self-sufficient. So, God does have a place for us and He does have something which He expects us to do. On the flip side, we will enjoy it; it will be gratifying. And we won't be spiritual welfare recipients sitting at home waiting for the next check. That is, we will live on more than just *logistical grace*. Essentially, if logistical grace is your life, and you have not progressed from that, you are essentially on spiritual welfare. You are sitting at home waiting for your sustenance check to arrive. You're not starting, you're not bad off; but spiritually, it is just not very fulfilling.

In case you are unfamiliar with the term *logistical grace*, let me hook you up:

Logistical Grace Support—A Brief Summary

1. Life-sustaining support is provided by God. No believer can depart from life apart from God's will. Therefore all the forces of hell cannot remove one believer apart from God's permission. God also provides all that it takes to support life. Psalm 48:14 This God is our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even unto death.
2. Temporal needs such as food, shelter, clothing, transportation, environment, time, a job, etc. are provided by God (Matt. 6:33 Philip. 4:19).
3. Security provision is taught in the doctrine of eternal security. Your security is from God. This includes the assignment of guardian angels and the provision of the laws of divine establishment for freedom to advance to maturity. If positive toward Bible doctrine, God provides the security for you to make that advance, as in the wall of fire. 1Peter 1:5 **We are kept by the power of God.**
4. Spiritual riches are provided by God, such as our portfolio of invisible assets, the ten problem-solving devices, and the unique factors of the Church-age. It also includes the provision of doctrinal teaching from your right pastor, privacy and security necessary to maintain positive volition, the royal family honor code, and discernment to see distractions and set them aside. Spiritual provision of an evangelist, a pastor, the privacy of your priesthood, the Canon, and a local church are all provided for you. Eph. 1:3: **Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing.**
5. Blessings are given to every believer, both winners and losers. These are not to be confused with escrow blessings which are far greater.
6. God preserves us from death.

This is taken directly from <http://www.gbible.org/trees/010707.htm>

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

I spent a long time in the working world, and there were some aspects of work which are very gratifying. I have worked on things around my house, including doing some of the remodeling and planning almost all of the remodeling, and this is very gratifying. With the advent of women's liberation in the US, millions of women have entered into the working world and these same women have a very difficult time choosing between work and running a home and family. Often, work can be more gratifying; or at least *seem* more gratifying. Our Christian service is very similar to this. There is gratification from our involvement in God's plan; there is gratification in knowing what God wants us to do and then doing it. If you are a new believer and you read this, and think to yourself, *I'm not really interested in doing any of this religious stuff*; that is fine. Don't get the cart before the horse. Learn Bible doctrine; learn what God does for you, and with spiritual growth will come a genuine interest in spiritual function.

Just so I don't confuse you here: I am not saying that you personally need to get out there and do something really spiritual. You need doctrine in your soul and production will be automatic. Production is a normal thing for a person to do as he grows spiritually; and it is not excessive. Remember Jesus exhorting His disciples to take His yoke upon themselves, because His yoke is easy and the burden is light (Matt. 11:30).

Let's see if I can come up with another illustration: you are a royal ambassador. You are living in a foreign country and you have a basic living stipend (logistical grace). You have news of a better way; you have news of your own Sovereign Who will freely give to those who ask. You can either sit on your duff and live on this stipend or you can share the news of your Sovereign, Who will freely give to those who ask of Him. Associated with the sharing of this information is great personal satisfaction as well as additional rewards.

However, I need to reiterate this: you cannot serve until you grow spiritually. In many cases, you may have no interest in serving until you grow spiritually. If you are revved up and you want to get out there and do great things for God, this is wonderful and commendable, but you need to have an idea what God actually wants you to do.

Let's say that the President of the United States hired you tomorrow to represent our country in some other land. Most of us would be flummoxed by such a responsibility and in order to fulfill this commission, we would need to study and understand the field manual in order to know what our actual responsibilities and duties are. It is no different in the Christian life. We have our field manual (the Bible) and the contents of this manual are taught in Bible class. If you do not bother to learn the field manual, then you are essentially living on the stipend our government gives you, and you are doing nothing for our government. This would be the equivalent to being on spiritual welfare, living on logistical grace alone. Once you have some training, then you will be motivated to function in this capacity and you will have a clue as to *what* you are actually supposed to be doing.

**...For great [is] Y^ehowah
and being praised exceedingly;
being feared He above all elohim;...**

Psalm
96:4

**...For Y^ehowah [is] great [and immutable]
and [He is] greatly praised [or, *celebrated*];
He [is] feared [and respected] above all
gods;...**

**...For Jehovah is great and He is to be greatly praised;
He is fears and respected above all gods;...**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	For great [is] Y ^e howah and being praised exceedingly; being feared He above all elohim.
Septuagint	For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is fearful [awe-inspiring] above all gods.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The LORD is great and deserves our greatest praise! He is the only God worthy of our worship.
Good News Bible (TEV)	The LORD is great and is to be highly praised; he is to be honored more than all the gods.
<i>The Message</i>	For GOD is great, and worth a thousand Hallelujahs. His terrible beauty makes the gods look cheap;...
New Century Version	...because the Lord is great; he should be praised at all times. He should be honored more than all the gods,...

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised; he is more to be feared than all other gods.
Easy English (Churchyard)	Because the *LORD is great, and everybody should say that he is great! People should be more afraid of him than of all (other) gods.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	The LORD is great! He should be highly praised. He should be feared more than all other gods...
JPS (Tanakh)	For the LORD is great and much acclaimed, He is held in awe by all divine beings.

NET Bible® For the LORD is great and certainly worthy of praise; he is more awesome than all gods. Or perhaps "and feared by all gods." See Psalm 89:7.

NIRV The Lord is great. He is really worthy of praise. People should have respect for him as the greatest God of all.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; He is to be reverently feared and worshiped above all [so-called] gods.

Clarke's Translation Jehovah is great, and greatly to be praised. Elohim is to be feared above all. Clarke does not have a separate translation, but he believes that *Elohim* ought to be the subject here in the final clause.

LTHB For Jehovah *is* great and greatly to be praised; He *is* to be feared above all gods.

NRSV For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.

Young's Literal Translation For great *is* Jehovah, and praised greatly, Fearful He *is* over all gods.

What is the gist of this verse? The reason that the Jews were to evangelize all the world is that, their God is great and deserving of praise.

Psalm 96:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
gâdôwl (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 yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: For Y^ehowah [is] great [and immutable]... At this point, we are given reasons *why* we ought to sing to Jehovah, *why* we should proclaim His name among the Gentiles, and *why* we should proclaim His Jesus. First, Jehovah is great, both in power and wealth and magnitude; He is immutable—He does not change. Jehovah is the true God of the world, the only God of the world.

Psalm 96:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Psalm 96:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlal (לָלַל) [pronounced haw-L AHL]	<i>to be praised, to be celebrated</i>	Pual participle	Strong's #1984 BDB #237
m ^e ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced m ^e -ODE]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

Translation: ...and [He is] greatly praised [or, celebrated];... Secondly, Jehovah is to be greatly praised and He is worthy of extreme praise. The verb can also mean celebrated, and, given the fact that we are sinful creatures who ought to be tossed into the Lake of Fire, we ought to reasonably celebrate our relationship to Him.

If you were about to be executed and the governor not only stayed the execution, but freed you, you would be quite thankful to that governor. I know someone who actually had to call upon Dennis Kucinich for a favor, and he came through, and this person has a great deal of respect and gratitude for Kucinich for this reason. To me, this man was just another unqualified Democrat running for president, but to her, this was a man who came through for her, who took up her cause and did not let her down. For that reason, she has a great deal of respect and gratitude toward Kucinich, which I fully understand. Jesus Christ has taken the punishment which we fully deserve upon Himself. We ought to be tossed into the Lake of Fire and burn forever for our sins and our rebellion; therefore, when David calls upon us here to praise Jesus Christ, our Savior, such a request is reasonable.

The continual calling upon man to praise God is not some super-ego thing. Who are you going to praise instead? Some movie star? Yourself? Buddha, whose religion has led many people into hell? There is only one logical and true celebrity in life, and that is Jesus Christ, Who died for our sins. It is impossible for us to fathom just how much suffering was involved at the cross. The cross itself and the physical pain involved is not the issue; God poured out all of our sins on Jesus Christ and judged Him for our sins. This is a pain and suffering which we will never know or completely understand or appreciate. So, Jesus Christ should be greatly praised.

Psalm 96:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yârê' (אָרַי) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to be feared, to be respected, to be reverence; terrible, dreadful, awesome; venerable, August; stupendous, admirable</i>	Niphal participle	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
hûw' (אוּהוּ) [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
'al (לְעַל) [pronounced gahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

Psalm 96:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>ʿēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]</p>	<p><i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i></p>	<p>masculine plural noun</p>	<p>Strong's #430 BDB #43</p>

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).

Clarke does not believe that *Elohim* should ever be translated *gods*; writing: *I doubt whether the word מִיְהוָה Elohim is ever, by fair construction, applied to false gods or idols.*¹⁹ Therefore, he translates this verse: **Jehovah is great, and greatly to be praised. Elohim is to be feared above all.** There is nothing which distinguishes *Elohim* as the object of the construct *all* except tradition. However, it should be pointed out that, if the same tradition which will not allow the name Y^ehowah to be spoken also allows for *elohim* to be understood to mean *gods*, then I would have to lean toward tradition rather than to Clarke's opinion thousands of years after the fact.

Translation: ...He [is] feared [and respected] above all gods;... This is one of the many passages which indicates that our Lord is exclusive; there is none of this, *worship whatever local god in whatever way that you choose; all roads lead to Rome.* Jehovah Elohim of the Old Testament and Jesus Christ of the New is portrayed as a very specific God—He is the God of the Universe Who created all things, and He is all-powerful, immutable, perfect justice and perfect righteousness, and, apart from Him, there is no other. At the time of this psalm, we are speaking of Jehovah Elohim, the God of the Jews, the revealed member of the Trinity. However, as we read back in v. 2, we are to **proclaim the good news of His Jesus**, Who is Jehovah Elohim.

Furthermore, there has only been one sacrifice made which is efficacious, and that is Jesus Christ. Buddha did not die for our sins; Mohammed did not die for our sins; Confucius did not die for our sins. None of these men even point to our Lord in any way; they are just men, and probably burning in torments right this moment with most of their followers. For these reason, Jesus Christ is to be feared, respected and revered above all gods.

Barnes comments: *He is to be revered and adored above all that are called gods. Higher honor is to be given Him; more lofty praise is to be ascribed to Him. He is Ruler over all the earth, and has a claim to universal praise. Even if it were admitted that they were real gods, yet it would still be true that they were local and inferior divinities; that they ruled only over the particular countries where they were worshipped and acknowledged as gods, and that they had no claim to "universal" adoration as Yahweh has.*²⁰

...For all elohim of the people [are] empty [vain] things, and Y^ehowah [the two] heavens made.

Psalm 96:5

...For all the gods of the people [are but] empty idols; but Y^ehowah made the [two] heavens.

...For all of the gods of the people are but empty, false gods; whereas Jehovah made the heavens above.

¹⁹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:4.

²⁰ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:4 (slightly edited).

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	For all elohim of the people [are] empty [vain] things, and Y ^e howah [the two] heavens made.
Septuagint	For all the gods of the heathen are demons: but the Lord made the heavens.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Other nations worship idols, but the LORD created the heavens.
<i>The Message</i>	Pagan gods are mere tatters and rags. GOD made the heavens—...
New American Bible	For the gods of the nations all do nothing, but the LORD made the heavens.
New Life Version	For all the gods of the nations are false gods. But the Lord made the heavens.
New Living Translation	The gods of other nations are mere idols, but the Lord made the heavens!

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	For all the gods of the nations are false gods; but the Lord made the heavens.
Complete Apostles' Bible	For all the gods of the heathen are demons; but the Lord made the heavens.
Easy English (Churchyard)	Because all the gods of every country are false. But the *LORD made everything.
JPS (Tanakh)	All the gods of the peoples are mere idols, but the LORD made the heavens.
NET Bible®	For all the gods of the nations are worthless [The Hebrew term לִילִים ('elilim, "worthless") sounds like מֵיֵהוּא ('elohim, "gods"). The sound play draws attention to the statement], but the LORD made the sky.
New International Version	All of the gods of the nations are like their statues. They can't do anything. But the Lord made the heavens.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	For all the mighty ones of the peoples are matters of naught, But הוהי made the heavens.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	For all the gods of the nations are [lifeless] idols, but the Lord made the heavens.
<i>Updated Emphasized Bible</i>	For all the gods of the peoples are things of nothing [or, <i>nobodies</i>]; But Yahweh made the heavens.
MKJV	For all the gods of the nations are idols; but Jehovah made the heavens.
Young's Updated LT	For all the gods of the peoples [are] nothing, And Jehovah made the heavens.

What is the gist of this verse? The gods of the various nations are nothing; Jehovah Elohim created all things.

Psalm 96:5a

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
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
ʿêlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural construct	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).

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 collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
ʿê lîyl (אֵלִיל) [pronounced <i>el-EEL</i>]	<i>of nothing, empty, vain; weak, deficient, insufficient; as a substantive: empty, vanity, idol</i>	masculine plural adjective; can be used as a substantive	Strong's #457 BDB #47

Given this word's similarity to ʿêlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced *el-o-HEEM*], I think that we could reasonably render the plural substantive as *false gods, empty gods, idols*. The LXX took these even a step further, branding them as *demons* (δαίμόνια).

The similarity if ʿelohim and ʿê lîyl is no doubt intentional and poetic.

Translation: *For all the gods of the people [are but] empty idols;...* Again and again in Scripture, the exclusivity of our God is emphasized. Any god put forth by heathen is weak, deficient, and insufficient; heathen gods are false at their very core, and empty idols.

Bullinger suggests that this could read: *The gods of the nations are imaginations.*²¹ We know that there are demons which abound in this world and sometimes, in some way, demons affix themselves to idols. However, since the gods made by man are spoken of again and again as being empty, it is reasonable for us to suppose that, no particular demon or cadre of demons is assigned to any humanly-devised god (like Molech or Allah). However, it is equally reasonable to suppose that, at any given time, there are demons associated with these gods. The Bible is never very specific here, and our interrelationship with demons is never laid out with great specifics either. For instance, Jesus cast out demons, as did His disciples; but nowhere in the epistles do we have a list of specific mechanics relating to the casting out of demons, nor do we even find any mechanics given in the

²¹ *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*; E. W. Bullinger; ©originally 1898; reprinted 1968 Baker Books; p 311.

gospels. This would suggest that, although we are in the Angelic Conflict, that our actual interaction with demons, apart from their doctrines, is minimal.

Barnes writes: *The meaning here is, that they were mere nothings; they had no real existence; they were the creations of the imagination; they could not in any sense be regarded as what it was pretended they were; they had no claim to reverence and worship as gods. Of most of them it was a fact that they had no existence at all, but were mere creatures of fancy. Of those that did really exist, as the sun, moon, stars, animals, or the spirits of departed people, though it was true that they had an actual existence, yet it was also true that they had no existence "as gods," or as entitled to worship; and hence, it was also true that the worship offered to them was as vain as that which was offered to mere beings of the imagination.*²²

I have not yet done a full-blown doctrine of Demonism or the Angelic Conflict, so I will give links to these below. These are doctrinal sites, but I have not checked through the doctrines myself, point by point.

Online Doctrines for Satan, Demonism and the Angelic Conflict

Demonism

<http://www.gracedoctrine.org/word/Doctrines/Spiritism.htm>

<http://www.aliveandpowerful.com/doctrines/demonism/demonism01.html>

<http://www.aliveandpowerful.com/doctrines/pdf/Demonism.PDF> (same as above)

<http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/demonism.html>

The Angelic Conflict

http://www.gbible.org/_files/pdf/The_Angelic_Conflict_Part1.pdf

<http://www.aliveandpowerful.com/doctrines/angels/angels01.html>

<http://www.aliveandpowerful.com/doctrines/pdf/Angels.PDF> (same as above)

<http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/angels.html>

Satan

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

Spiritual Warfare

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

These are probably not exhaustive of what is available in the internet and relatively accurate; but these should be enough.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

²² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:5.

Psalm 96:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
<p>The wâw conjunction is used as ❶ a simple copulative, used to connect words and sentences, in which case it is usually rendered <i>and</i>. ❷ It can be used to explain one noun or clarify one noun with another, in which case it is rendered <i>even</i> or <i>yea</i> (see Job 5:19 Dan. 4:10). ❸ The wâw conjunction can introduce two nouns, where the first is the genus and the second is the species; in which case, we would render it <i>and particularly, and specially, and namely, and specifically</i> (and it can be used the other way as well) (see 2Kings 23:2 Psalm 18:1 Isa. 1:1 2:1 Zech. 14:21). ❹ It can be prefixed to a verb also by way of explanation; it could be reasonably rendered as a relative pronoun (<i>who, which</i>) (see Gen. 49:25 Job 29:12 Isa. 13:14). ❺ It can be used to begin an apodosis (the <i>then</i> portion of an <i>if...then...</i> statement) (see Gen. 2:4, 5 40:9 48:7). ❻ It is used between words and sentences in order to compare them or to mark their resemblance (1Sam. 12:15 Job 5:7). ❼ When doubled, it can mean <i>both...and...</i> (Num. 9:14 Joshua 7:24 Psalm 76:7). ❽ It can be prefixed to adversative sentences or clauses and rendered <i>but, and yet, although, otherwise</i> (Gen. 2:17 15:2 17:20 Judges 16:15 Ruth 1:21 Job 15:5 6:14). ❾ And, what we were after, is the wâw conjunction can be used in disjunctive sentences; that is, it can be rendered <i>or</i> (which will help us to understand what Jephthah does) (Ex. 21:17 Lev. 5:3 Deut. 24:7). ❿ Finally, the wâw conjunction can be used before causal sentences and rendered <i>because, for, that, in that</i> (Gen. 18:32 30:27 Psalm 5:12 60:13); before conclusions or inferences, and therefore rendered <i>so that, therefore, wherefore</i> (2Kings 4:41 Isa. 3:14 Ezek. 18:32 Zech. 2:10); and before final and consecutive sentences, which mark an end or an object: <i>in order that</i> (Gen. 42:34 Job 20:10 Isa. 13:2). To paraphrase Gesenius, <i>frequently, it is put after verbs and sentences standing absolutely, especially those which imply time or condition</i> and is reasonably rendered <i>then</i>.²³</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
shâmayîm (שמים) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAH-yim</i>]	<i>heavens, skies</i>	masculine dual noun	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
ʿâsâh (עשה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

Translation: ...and Y^ehowah made the [two] heavens. David (or Asaph) gives one simple reason why Jehovah Elohim is the only God—He created the two heavens, which would be the atmosphere and outer space. No religious figure or icon can make such a statement.

The thrust of this verse is, the gods of other nations are mere idols; and that God made the heavens. These heathen gods are thought to inhabit the heavens, and yet, Jehovah Elohim, the God of the Jews, actually made these heavens where they supposedly cavort.²⁴ Now note how universal the thrust of this psalm is: (1) it is directed to the nations (vv. 3, 7, 9–10, 13) and (2) the true God of all mankind is Jehovah Elohim (vv. 2, 4, 7–10, 13) because the heathen gods are empty, meaningless idols (vv. 4–5).

²³ H. W. F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 234. When I give a slightly different rendering to a word which I have, 99% of the time, been translating one way, I thought that I should include some documentation for a different usage.

²⁴ From *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995 by The Zondervan Corporation; p. 881 (footnote).

There are two²⁵ very amazing things about what God has created: what He has created is larger than we can even imagine. We can barely imagine our distance from the sun (93 million miles), the relationship between the size of the earth, the sun and the distance between us is something that few people fathom. We see a book with a picture of the planets rotating around the sun, and we do not have a clue as to how out of balance that artistic retention is. If we wanted to give a true representation of the sun and earth and the distance between them in a book, it would be flat out impossible. We could not print it, because even the sun would be too small. It would not even occupy one pixel of area, if a true representation of the distance between the earth and sun was to be represented to scale in a book. And this distance is nothing; 93 million miles of distance in space is tiny. The second amazing thing about what God has created is, just how small things are. It is beyond our ability to imagine the size of an atom, a proton or an electron. We see models of these things, but it is beyond our imagination to grasp how much space is between the various molecules of any substance or compound. We have very reasonable theories as to the way things are put together at an atomic level, but these things are far too small for us to see, even with the greatest microscopes. If you are not an artist, and you are given some burnt bark and a cave wall, and told to draw a picture of your mother, your finished result would be much more accurate than the pictures and drawings of what is going on at the atomic level in any chemistry book. And, apparently, the proton, neutron and electron are not the most basic building blocks, but they appear to be made of sub-atomic particles (and we have no idea how much further this can go). But, in any case, we can barely imagine those things at that size and draw crude, caveman drawings of these things. All that is created by God is too vast to imagine as well as too small to appreciate or to actually draw a reasonable representation of. It is amazing. And as small as a molecule to us is, we are even smaller in comparison to the universe that we live in; and yet, Christ died for us.

Can you imagine building some statue of some sort with your two hands and then worshiping that statue? Do you see how foolish that is to God Who created the universe—something whose vastness and smallness cannot be even imagined by us? Or can you imagine how silly it is for us to develop philosophies and religions—idols of our imaginations—and then worshiping whatever sort of imaginary god that we have created? And further, do you see how insulting it is to worship that which is not God, when He died for us? Look, if you were to sit down with a piece of paper and plus and minus columns, to compare, for instance, God and idols; or God and your own personal philosophy or religion (or that which you have been indoctrinated with), how lopsided this would be? **For all gods are empty, meaningless idols; but Jehovah created the universe.** These gods, these idols, these religious philosophies which you have developed, are nothing and meaningless; but God created the universe, which is far greater than you can even imagine.

Barnes comments: The power of "creation" - of causing anything to exist where there was nothing before - must pertain to God alone, and is the highest act of Divinity. No pretended pagan god has that power; no man has that power.

Remember, we are made in God's image, so one aspect of our character, to whatever degree, is to create things (strictly speaking, we make things). For those of you who have ever built a bookcase, redesigned your kitchen, dug out a garden, customized your car, designed a worksheet or a test, developed a series of exercises for your team or your recruits—these acts are a reflection of Jehovah, Who made the two heavens and all that is in them.

Here are a few passages which deal with the worship of idols.

²⁵ Quite obviously, there are far more than just *two* amazing things.

The Bible on Idolatry as Opposed the God of the Universe	
Scripture	Incident
Psalm 115:3–8	But our God is in Heaven; He has done all that He has pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of man's hands; they have mouths, but they do not speak; they have eyes, but they do not see; they have ears, but they do not hear; they have a nose, but they do not smell; their hands do not feel; their feet do not walk; they do not mutter through their throat. The ones who make them are like them, and everyone trusting in them. Idols were made in the form of a man, animals, or somewhere in between. They came from a man's imagination. They were made with eyes, ears and noses, but they do not see, hear or smell. The psalmist says, if you trust in these idols, you are just like them; just as obvious to reality.
Psalm 135:15–18	The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of men's hands; they have mouths, but they say nothing; they have eyes, but they see nothing; they have ears, but they hear nothing; yea, there is no breath in their mouths. Those who make them are like them, everyone who is trusting in them. This is essentially the same theme as above.
Isa. 44:8–14	Do not dread, nor be afraid. Have I not declared and made you hear since then? So you are My witnesses: Is there a God besides Me? Yea, there is none. I have not known a Rock. Those who form a carved image are all of them vanity. And their delights do not profit; and they are their own witnesses. They do not see, nor know, that they may be ashamed. Who has formed a god, or poured out an image to no profit? Behold, all his companions shall be ashamed; and the craftsmen, they are from men. They shall assemble, all of them shall stand; they shall dread; they shall be shamed together. He carves iron with a tool; he works in the coals and forms it with hammers, and works it with his powerful arm; then he is hungry, and has no strength; he drinks no water and is weary. He fashions wood, and stretches a line; he marks it with a stylus; he shapes it with a carving tool, and he marks it with a compass. And he makes it according to the figure of a man, as the beauty of a man, to sit in the house. He cuts down cedars and takes cypress and oak, and he makes the trees of the forest strong for him. He plants a tree, and rain makes it grow. This is one of the most extensive passages on idolatry, so I broke it down into paragraphs. Here, the absolute craftsmanship of the idol-maker is explored, and it is pointed out that, he does this for profit.
Isa. 44:15–17	And it shall be for a man to burn; yea, he takes of them and is warmed; and he kindles it and bakes bread. Yea, he makes a god and worships; he makes a carved image and bows to it. He burns half of it in the fire; he eats flesh on half of it; he roasts roast, and is satisfied. Then he warms himself and says, Ah, I am warm; I have seen the fire. And he makes a god of the rest, his carved image; he bows to it and worships, and prays to it, and says, Deliver me, for you are my god. The very tree with God grows with His rain is used to build a home as well as to burn for fuel. And the artisan makes some carved image from the same and worships it. You might as well worship your own house or a fire that you have started.

The Bible on Idolatry as Opposed the God of the Universe	
Scripture	Incident
Isa. 44:18–20	They do not know nor discern; for He has smeared their eyes from seeing, their hearts from understanding. And not one turns back to his heart, nor has knowledge nor discernment to say, I have burned half of it in the fire; and I also have baked bread on its coals. I have roasted flesh and have eaten it; and I have made the rest of it into an idol. Shall I bow to a product of a tree? Feeding on ashes, a deceived heart turns him aside, and he does not deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? The theme found in the psalms is repeated here—these idols are incapable of doing anything. Another type of idol is mentioned here as well—one which is made out of leftover animal parts. The artisan might use the animal skin or its horns to fashion a fancier idol; but this idol can do nothing.
Isa. 44:21–23	Remember these, O Jacob, and Israel. For you are My servant; I have formed you; you are My servant, O Israel; you shall not forget Me. I have blotted out your transgressions like a thick cloud; and your sins like a cloud. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you. Sing, O heavens, for Jehovah has done it. Shout, O lower parts of the earth; burst forth into praise, O mountains. O forest and every tree in it, sing praise, because Jehovah has redeemed Jacob, and He glorifies Himself in Israel. God points out what He has done: He has blotted out our transgressions and sins; how can we worship something else?
Isa. 44:24–28	So says Jehovah, your Redeemer and your Former from the womb; I am Jehovah who makes all things; stretching out the heavens, I alone spreading out the heavens. Who was with Me, frustrating the signs of liars; yea, He makes divining ones mad, turning wise ones backward, and making their knowledge foolish. He confirms the word of His servant, and completes the counsel of His messengers. He says to Jerusalem, You will be filled; and to the cities of Judah, You shall be built; and, I will raise up its ruins. He says to the deep, Be a waste! And I will dry up your rivers! He says to Cyrus, You are My shepherd; and he shall complete all My pleasure, even for Me to say to Jerusalem, You are built; and to the temple, You are founded. In contrast to the nothing that idols are capable of doing; God makes all things, He stretches out the heavens, He shows religious types to be foolish, He confirms His Word to us; He raises up Jerusalem out of ruins; and He guides rulers to do His bidding.
Isa. 46:1–2	Bel has bowed; Nebo stoops; their idols are for the beast, and for the cattle; your things carried are loads; a burden for the weary. They stoop; they bow together; they are not able to deliver the burden; and their soul has gone into captivity. These others can do nothing; they cannot deliver; and they are a burden to carry around.
Jer. 10:3–6	For the ordinances of the people are vanity. For one cuts a tree out of the forest with the axe, the work of the hands of the craftsman. They adorn it with silver and with gold; they make them strong with nails and hammers, so that it will not wobble. They are like a rounded post, and they cannot speak; carrying they must be carried, because they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil nor good; it is not with them. There is none like You, O Jehovah; You are great, and Your name is great in might. Again, we have a comparison between the artisan nature of these idols and how they are unable to do anything. If the idol needs to go from point A to point B, someone has to carry it.

The Bible on Idolatry as Opposed the God of the Universe	
Scripture	Incident
Jer. 10:11–15	So you shall say to them, The gods who have not made the heavens and the earth, they shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens. It is He who made the earth by His power, who established the world by His wisdom, and who stretched out the heavens by His understanding. When He utters His voice, there is a noise of waters in the heavens. He causes the vapors to go up from the ends of the earth; He makes lightnings for the rain and brings forth the wind out of His storehouses. Every man is stupid from lack of knowledge; every refiner is put to shame by the carved image. For his molten image is a lie and no breath is in them. They are vanity, the work of delusion. In the time of their judgment they shall perish. These idols are vanity and works of delusion, and they will persih. When God utters His voice, vapors go up from the ends of the earth, and rain and wind are brought of where they appear to be stored by His Word.
Acts 19:26–29	And you see and hear that not only Ephesus, but almost all of Asia, persuading, this Paul perverted a considerable crowd, saying that those being made by hands are not gods. And not only is this dangerous to us, lest our part come to be in contempt, but also the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be counted nothing, and her majesty is also about to be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worships. And having heard, and having become full of anger, they cried out, saying, Great is Artemis of the Ephesians! And all the city was filled with confusion. And they rushed with one passion into the theater, keeping a firm grip on Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, traveling companions of Paul. This is hilarious! Paul explains that these things made by hand are not gods, and these people are running through the streets screaming “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” We have the modern day equivalent of this. When the Danish newspapers printed some cartoon which featured Mohammed, huge groups of Muslims rioted in the streets, and these cities were filled with confusion.
1Cor. 8:4–6	Then concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God except one. For even if some are called gods, either in the heavens or on the earth; (even as there are many gods, and many lords); but to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we by Him. Paul carries the exact same thinking into the New Testament—idols are meaningless.

These passages, for the most part, are 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 96:5.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

**Majesty and splendor to His faces;
strength and glory in His sanctuary.**

Psalm
96:6

**Majesty and Splendor [are] before Him [or, in
His sight];
strength [and refuge] and glory [and beauty]
[are] in His sanctuary.**

**Before God are Majesty and Splendor;
and within His sanctuary can be found strength, refuge, glory and beauty.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Majesty and splendor to His faces; strength and glory in His sanctuary.
Septuagint	Thanksgiving and beauty are before him: holiness and majesty are in his sanctuary.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Give honor and praise to the LORD, whose power and beauty fill his holy temple."
Good News Bible (TEV)	Glory and majesty surround him; power and beauty fill his Temple.
<i>The Message</i>	Royal splendor radiates from him, A powerful beauty sets him apart.
New American Bible	Splendor and power go before him; power and grandeur are in his holy place.
New Century Version	The Lord has glory and majesty; he has power and beauty in his Temple.
New Life Version	Honor and great power are with Him. Strength and beauty are in His holy place.
New Living Translation	Honor and majesty surround him; strength and beauty fill his sanctuary.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Honour and glory are before him: strong and fair is his holy place.
Complete Apostles' Bible	Thanksgiving and beauty are before Him; holiness and majesty are in His sanctuary.
Easy English (Churchyard)	(People that) are near him can see that he is a very great king. (People that) are in his house can see that he is strong and beautiful.
<i>God's Word</i> TM	Splendor and majesty are in his presence. Strength and beauty are in his holy place.
JPS (Tanakh)	Glory and majesty are before Him; strength and splendor are in His temple.
NET Bible®	Majestic splendor emanates from him [Hebrew "majesty and splendor [are] before him"]; his sanctuary is firmly established and beautiful [Hebrew "strength and beauty [are] in his sanctuary"].
NIRV	Glory and majesty are all around him. Strength and glory can be seen in his temple.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	Excellency and splendour are before Him, Strength and comeliness are in His set-apart place.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.
<i>Updated Emphasized Bible</i>	Praise and majesty are before Him, Strength and beauty [some codices have, <i>joy</i> ; see 1Chron. 16:27] are in His sanctuary [some codices have, <i>dwelling place</i> ; see 1Chron. 16:27].
NRSV	Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
Young's Updated LT	Honour and majesty [are] before Him, Strength and beauty in His sanctuary.

What is the gist of this verse? Before God the Father stands God the Son and the Holy Spirit (metaphorically speaking) as majestic and honorable. God's strength and beauty can be found in His sanctuary.

Psalm 96:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hōwd (הוֹד) [pronounced <i>hohd</i>]	<i>majesty, glory, magnificence; splendor, beauty</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1935 BDB #217
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâdâr (הַדָּר) [pronounced <i>haw-DAWR</i>]	<i>majesty, splendor; ornament, adorning, decoration; honor</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1926 BDB #214
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 noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, they mean *before him, before his face, in his presence, in his sight, in front of him.*

Translation: *Majesty and Splendor [are] before Him [or, in His sight];...* What I see here is the Trinity. There is Jehovah Elohim, and in front of Him, in His sight is Majesty and Splendor. In God's presence are the other two members of the Trinity, who have equivalent essence, and are therefore called, Majestic and Splendiferous.

Recognize that in the 3rd heaven—wherever that is and whatever it is—there is the throne room of God, as we find in the first chapter of Job. God is here, and before Him, in His sight, in front of Him, are Majesty and Splendor. So, what does this mean? Let me give you some comments from great and good commentators:

What Does it Mean for Majesty and Splendor [to be] Before Him?

Commentator	Explanation
Barnes	<i>...that which constitutes honor, glory, majesty, is in His presence, or wherever He is. Wherever He manifests Himself, there are the exhibitions of honor and majesty. They are always the accompaniments of His presence.²⁶</i>
Clarke	<i>Does this refer to the cloud of his glory that preceded the Ark in their journeying through the wilderness?²⁷ To answer, we scan the context of this phrase for clues, looking at all surrounding verses, and the answer would seem to be, I don't think so. Even though this psalm celebrates the movement of the Ark into Jerusalem, there is nothing found contextually to suggest an affirmative answer to Clarke's question.</i>

²⁶ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:6 (slightly edited).

²⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:6 (slightly edited).

What Does it Mean for **Majesty and Splendor [to be] Before Him?**

Commentator	Explanation
Gill	<i>He being set down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, and having honour and majesty laid upon Him; being arrayed in robes of majesty, crowned with glory and honour, sitting on the same throne of glory with His Father, and having a sceptre of righteousness in His hand, and all the forms and ensigns of royalty and majesty about Him; rays of light and glory darting from Him; as well as those glorious and bright forms before Him; the holy angels continually praising Him; which is a much more noble sense than that of Kimchi's, who interprets them of the stars.</i> ²⁸
Jamieson, Fausset and Brown	<i>Honour and majesty are His attendants, declared in His mighty works [among which, presumably, would be the creation of the heavens].</i> ²⁹
Spurgeon	<i>Men can but mimic these things; their pompous pageants are but the pretense of greatness. Honour and majesty are with Him and with Him alone. In the presence of Jehovah real glory and sovereignty abide, as constant attendants.</i> ³⁰

Now let me explain this properly:

Kukis	<p>As clearly agreed to, <i>Him</i> refers to Jesus Christ, Who made the heavens in the previous verse. <i>Glory and majesty</i> (or, <i>majesty and splendor</i>) are nouns typically applied to God (1Chron. 29:11 Job 37:22 Psalm 8:1 29:4 45:3 104:1 145:5 148:13 Isa. 2:10, 19 Habak. 3:3 Zech. 6:13; this is not a complete listing and these nouns are applied to other things as well—<i>kings</i>, for example). In the presence of Jesus Christ, the reveal member of the Godhead, are God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, Who are herein spoken of as Glory and Majesty.</p> <p>This, by the way, is not a Church Age doctrine, and therefore is revealed throughout the Old Testament (Gen. 1:1–2, 26 Psalm 45:1–7 Isa. 48:16 Daniel 7:13 Hosea 1:7). This does not mean, necessarily, that even the greatest Jewish theologians understood this; and even the believers who wrote these words may not have understood their full import. This is known as progressive revelation. However, it helps us to understand how God can create all things, and yet come into this world as a man, empowered by the Holy Spirit under the direction of God the Father. In fact, the Trinity is one of those doctrines which confirms the accuracy of Scripture—even though this is something which was not recognized in the Old Testament, it is certainly found throughout the Old Testament, and confirmed for us in the New. Can you imagine believers filled with God the Holy Spirit, writing down things in the Old Testament which they themselves did not fully appreciate, and then for this doctrine of the Trinity to seemingly come alive to us in the New?</p>
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Now, David was certainly not thinking about the Trinity when he wrote these words. He is reasonably speaking of the God of Israel, Who made the heavens, Who is Jesus Christ. What is before Him, in the thinking of David? Let me suggest, His plan (the plan of God the Father) and the ability to carry out this plan (God the Holy Spirit), which would come part and parcel to His creation of the heavens and earth. Or, perhaps, as Barnes suggests, that these attributes—glory and majesty—are always to be found with the Lord Jehovah, and are therefore said to be *before Him*. This would further contrast the God of Israel with the idols of v. 5.

²⁸ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:6 (slightly edited).

²⁹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, Psalm 96:6.

³⁰ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 96 (slightly edited).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The first half of our verse reads: Majesty and Splendor [are] before Him [or, in His sight];... I would like to present a few parallel passages. However, because these words are translated in a number of ways, I will match them using underline and bold.

Scripture on God’s Majesty and Splendor (or Glory and Majesty)	
Scripture	Incident
Job 40:9–10	And have you an arm like God; or can you thunder with a voice like His? Adorn yourself with majesty now, and with grandeur, and clothe yourself with <u>glory</u> and honor . God is bringing Job down to size and differentiating Himself from Job. God tells Job to do a litany of things which Job obviously cannot, because he is not God.
Psalm 45:1–3	My heart is overflowing with a good matter. I am speaking of my works to the King; my tongue is the pen of a rapid writer. You are the fairest of the sons of man; grace has poured into Your lips; on this account God has blessed You forever. Gird Your sword on Your thigh, Mighty One; with Your <u>glory</u> and Your majesty .
Psalm 104:1–2	Bless Jehovah, O my soul! O Jehovah my God, You are very great; You have put on <u>honor</u> and majesty , covering Yourself with light like a cloak, and stretching out the heavens like a curtain.
Psalm 111:2–3	The works of Jehovah are great, sought out by all those desiring them. His work is <u>honorable</u> and glorious ; and His righteousness is standing forever.
Psalm 145:5–6	I will muse on the glorious honor of Your <u>majesty</u> , and the things of Your wonderful works. And they shall speak of the might of Your awesome works, and I will declare Your greatness.

One of these days, I will need to investigate these two words and develop a better understanding of them, beyond *glory* and *honor*.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Psalm 96:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
ʿôz (זֹר) [pronounced <i>gohz</i>]	<i>strength, might; firmness, defense, refuge, protection; splendor, majesty, glory praise</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong’s #5797 BDB #738
wê (or vê) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
tîph’ârâh (תִּפְאָרָה) [pronounced <i>tif-aw-RAW</i>]	<i>splendor, beauty, ornament; glory, glorying</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong’s #8597 BDB #802

The word found in 1Chron. 16:27 (the parallel passage) is quite different here, and it means *joy, happiness, gladness*.

Psalm 96:6b

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
mīq ^e ddāsh (מִדְּקָדֵשׁ) [pronounced mik- DAWSH]	<i>sanctuary, sacred place; possibly a synonym for the Tabernacle of God</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4720 BDB #874

We have a slightly different word here in the parallel passage of 1Chron. 16:27, which simply means *place*.

Keil and Delitzsch suggests this: *the chronicler may, however, have altered וּשְׂדֵקְמָב into וּמְקָמָב because when the Ark was brought in, the Temple (תֵּיב שְׂדֵקְמָה) was not yet built.*³¹ What Keil and Delitzsch seem to be suggesting is, the chronicler thought about this, decided, *no, this just doesn't comport with those times*, and changed the text in order to agree with those times. Personally, I cannot buy into that.

Barnes comments on these variations: *These variations are such as to show that the psalm is not a mere extract, but that it was altered of design, and adapted to the occasion on which it was to be employed - confirming the supposition that it may have been used in the re-dedication of the temple after the return from the captivity. The word "sanctuary" refers to the holy place where God dwells; his sacred abode, whether his residence in heaven, or the temple on earth as the place of his earthly habitation. When it is said that "strength" is there, it means that the dwelling-place of God is the source of "power," or that power emanates from thence; that is, from God himself. When it is said that "beauty" is there, the meaning is, that whatever is suited to charm by loveliness; whatever is a real ornament; whatever makes the world attractive; whatever beautifies and adorns creation, has its home in God; it proceeds from him. It may be added that whatever there is of "power" to reform the world, and convert sinners; whatever there is to turn people from their vicious and abandoned course of life; whatever there is to make the world better and happier, proceeds from the "sanctuary" - the church of God. Whatever there is that truly adorns society, and makes it more lovely and attractive; whatever there is that diffuses a charm over domestic and social life; whatever there is that makes the world more lovely or more desirable to live in - more courteous, more gentle, more humane, more kind, more forgiving - has its home in the "sanctuary," or emanates from the church of God.*³²

Let me break it down for you: It is possible that this psalm was later altered in order to comport well with the rebuilding of the Temple. That would explain the form which we find here, which comports with the Greek inscription. The original form is what we find in Chronicles, which is what was sung when the Ark was brought into Jerusalem. This psalm was later adapted slightly to celebrate the rebuilding of the new Temple, and that is the form which we find in this psalms themselves.

Or, David already wrote this psalm as is (as we find in the psalms), but it was changed slightly by Asaph to fit in with the ceremony where it was sung (the Chronicle's version). Either explanation makes sense; no scribe is looking at the text and thinking to themselves, "Hmm, I really don't think this should read this way, I need to change it." It is reasonable that Asaph would alter a few words here or there to appropriately match the occasion, and it makes less sense for someone to actually change this psalm, after it is clearly a part of the Word of God, at a much later date (in other words, I am diametrically opposed to the explanation of Keil and Delitzsch).

Translation: ...strength [and refuge] and glory [and beauty] [are] in His sanctuary. We actually have very little said about David and the Tabernacle of God. When Saul was king, it does not appear as though the Tabernacle

³¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Psalm 96:4–6.

³² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:6.

was given any prominence. We know of one time when David went to the Tabernacle as a refugee and took the holy bread to be eaten by himself and his men, and his trip there resulted in the priests of Nob being killed by Saul.

We also know that in David's mind, he is thinking about building a Temple—a permanent home—for God. It is reasonable for us to assume that David is thinking about this Temple as he writes this psalm. The nouns used here could also be translated as *majesty and splendor*, describing what could be found in the sanctuary (Temple) of God. In the Tabernacle was knowledge of God the Savior, God the Planner and God the Holy Spirit; the co-equal members of the Trinity. Knowledge of Them could be found within the Tabernacle and later, within the Temple (which Solomon, not David, would build).³³

There is also great beauty here. In many churches, the Old Testament is called upon for some favorite Bible studies and for a proof text here and there, but little time is ever given to a complete examination of God's Word. When I go through the Old Testament, I am constantly amazed as to how much is found within it and how clearly Christ is presented in shadow form throughout the entire Old Testament.

In college, I got a BA degree in mathematics, and it was quite fascinating to examine the structure and, yes, beauty, of the various fields of mathematics which are out there. I've taught this same sort of precision and structure to my students, and those who get it (many of my advanced students) are also impressed with how systems of mathematics are developed. We have a very similar beauty in Scripture, in the Tabernacle, in the way that God reveals His plan so that, if you study the New Testament and then go back and view the shadow forms found in the Old, it is a thing of amazement and beauty. It would be difficult if not impossible to reject the God of the Bible, after thoroughly examining both the Old and New Testaments. These things just fit together too well.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Within God's Tabernacle and within His holy Temple, there was strength, refuge, glory and beauty; as well as knowledge of the Godhead and the work of God the Son.

The Tabernacle and the Holy Furniture

1. First of all, we have an outer court, which surrounds the Tabernacle and inside this court we have the plan of God. Outside of this court, we have the rest of the world, going to hell in a handbasket, as it were. Entering into this court indicates positive volition toward God and an interest in the gospel. Going into this court does not mean that a person is saved. He must examine what is laid out before him and decide whether or not to believe in Jehovah Elohim.
2. Although some of the furniture cannot be seen, all of the furniture is set up in the shape of a cross, as I have revealed in my Doctrine of the **Placement of the Tabernacle Furniture** (this simply shows you how the furniture is laid out). The reason that all of the furniture could not be seen is, God revealed the cross in shadow form; God the Holy Spirit made it real to the Old Testament saints (before they were saints); and they believed in Jehovah Elohim and they became saints.
3. In other words, you step into the outer court, and right in front of you is the cross. The first piece of furniture is the burnt altar or the brazen altar. This is where the animal sacrifices were offered, where burnt offerings and blood were put before the observer (or, the worshiper brought the animal himself, but the priest offered this animal on the brazen altar. This of course represents Jesus Christ dying for our sins, the blood of the animal representing our Lord being judged for our sins.
4. Behind the cross is the bronze laver where one would wash his hands. Now, of course, when dealing with these animal sacrifices and all of the blood, this would be expected to be somewhere, as priests would need to wash up. However, it represents rebound, the first spiritual skill which we must use. On this earth, we have feet of clay. The ground is the floor for this outer court, and our feet are always in contact

³³ And this was not an arbitrary choice; God had reasons for Solomon to build the Temple instead of David. David represented the 1st Advent of Jesus Christ and the Angelic Conflict; Solomon represents the 2nd Advent of Jesus Christ and His Millennial reign. Therefore, Solomon needed to be associated with the permanent Temple, as Jesus Christ in His second advent would remain on this earth for 1000 years.

The Tabernacle and the Holy Furniture

- with the ground, which we may understand to be the world. Because we are constantly soiled by the function of our sin nature, we wash in the bronze laver, in order to restore temporal fellowship.
5. The Table of Showbread represents provision by God as well as fellowship with God. Eating a meal with someone is the concept of fellowship. Even in families, those who sit down to a family meal regularly, are better off than those who do not. The fact that the bread was replenished daily, indicates that God's provisions for us are given to us daily from a God Who knows our needs. R. B. Thieme Jr. calls this logistical grace.
 6. Opposite the Table of Showbread is the Golden Lampstand. These are 7 candles which remain lit, which represent the perfect plan of God (the number 7 is a number of completion or of perfection), and their burning indicates our continued lives on this earth. This also is the light of God, which is His Word. We function in this life by His Word.
 7. In front of the Holy of Holies (a compartment within the Tabernacle of God) is the golden altar of incense, where incense would be burned, indicating the production of divine good, which is a sweet savor to God. After we have rebounded, after God has provided for us our necessities, and after we have mediated in the Word, we produce divine good. This divine good is the sweet savor of incense which reaches up to heaven to God.
 8. Finally, inside the Holy of Holies is the Ark of the Covenant, which very few men have ever seen. This represents Jesus Christ. There have been groups of men who have seen the Ark, some who have prospered and some whom have died as a result of their connection to the Ark (much the same way our Lord, during His 1st Advent, could be both a blessing and a cursing to those around Him). Just as most people have never seen the Ark and just as the Ark was hidden from those in the Old Testament (with the exception of a few), so Jesus Christ has been seen by very few, and revealed only in shadow form to those in the Old Testament. The Ark was acacia wood (representing His humanity) covered with gold (which represents His deity). Once a year, the High Priest would enter the Holy of Holies will blood and he would pour this blood upon the top of the Ark, toward which 2 angels would look, representing the elect and fallen angels. I have covered the **Ark of the Covenant** in great detail already.
 9. Therefore, within God's Tabernacle and within His holy Temple, there was strength, refuge, glory and beauty; as well as knowledge of the Godhead and the work of God the Son.

Although I have given a moderately detailed description of the furniture in the Tabernacle (and outside of the Tabernacle) in **Ex. 40**, I still need to go back and cover these in great detail.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

God's glory and beauty are revealed throughout the Old Testament; and quite obviously in His Temple.

Jehovah is to be Glorified—He Establishes the Earth

**Give to Y^ehowah [all] families of peoples;
Give to Y^ehowah glory and strength.**

Psalm
96:7

**Grant to Y^ehowah the families of [various]
nations;
ascribe [or, grant] to Y^ehowah glory and
strength [or, majesty].**

**Give to Jehovah the families of various nations;
and give to Jehovah the glory and strength.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text Give to Y^ehowah all families of peoples;
 Give to Y^ehowah glory and strength.
 Septuagint Bring to the Lord, [ye] families of the Gentiles, bring to the Lord glory and honour.
 Significant differences: There is some interpretation involved in the translating of the text into Greek, but it appears as though the original text from which they worked matches the Hebrew text which I am using.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Tell everyone of every nation, "Praise the glorious power of the LORD.
 Good News Bible (TEV) Praise the LORD, all people on earth; praise his glory and might.
The Message Bravo, GOD, Bravo! Everyone join in the great shout: Encore! In awe before the beauty, in awe before the might.
 New Century Version Praise the Lord, all nations on earth;
 praise the Lord's glory and power.
 New Life Version Give to the Lord, O families of the nations, give to the Lord the honor and strength that He should have.
 New Living Translation O nations of the world, recognize the Lord;
 recognize that the Lord is glorious and strong.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Apostles' Bible Bring to the Lord, you families of the Gentiles, bring to the Lord glory and honor.
 Easy English (Churchyard) Say to the LORD, you families of nations,
 say to the LORD that he is glorious and powerful.
The Scriptures 1998 Ascribe to יהוה, O clans of the peoples, Ascribe to יהוה esteem and strength.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

MKJV Give to Jehovah, O families of the people; give to Jehovah glory and strength.
Young's Literal Translation Ascribe to Jehovah, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to Jehovah honour and strength.

What is the gist of this verse? All of the families of the nations are to ascribe to Jehovah honor and strength.

Psalm 96:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâhab (יָהַב) [pronounced yaw-HAWB ^v]	to give, to give here; to grant, to permit; to provide [with reflexive]; to place, to put to set; to ascribe	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #3051 BDB #396
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y ^e howah	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Psalm 96:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâhab (יָהַב) [pronounced yaw-HAWB ^v]	<i>to give, to give here; to grant, to permit; to provide [with reflexive]; to place, to put to set; to ascribe</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #3051 BDB #396
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
kâbôwd (כְּבוֹד) [pronounced kaw ^b -VODE]	<i>glory, abundance, honor</i>	masculine singular adjective which sometimes acts as a noun; with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3519 BDB #458
Owen calls this a masculine singular noun.			
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ôz (זֹר) [pronounced gohz]	<i>strength, might; firmness, defense, refuge, protection; splendor, majesty, glory praise</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5797 BDB #738

Translation: ...*ascribe* [or, *grant*] to Y^ehowah *glory and strength* [or, *majesty*]. This is a bit more difficult to understand, and we may want to actually use a different meaning of the imperative verb here, and *ascribe to Jehovah glory, honor and strength*. We are to recognize that God's plan glorifies Him and that we can trust God to be our strength.

There is not a problem with allowing a dual interpretation here: (1) this command is issued to families of nations, and the content of this command is found in v. 7b; and (2) this command, which has two meanings, has one meaning applied to the object (*families of nations*) and the other applied to *glory and strength*.

Translations and Interpretations of Psalm 96:7 Part I

Approach	Translation
Essentially ignore some of the words which are found here and just make up your own version:	CEV: <i>Tell everyone of every nation, "Praise the glorious power of the LORD.</i> NCV: <i>Praise the Lord, all nations on earth; praise the Lord's glory and power.</i> NLT: <i>O nations of the world, recognize the Lord; recognize that the Lord is glorious and strong. Literally, both halves of this verse begin, Give [or, ascribe] to the Lord... The New Living Translation changes that up just enough to put forth their translations.</i>

Translations and Interpretations of Psalm 96:7 Part I

Approach	Translation
<p>Consistently translate the verb <i>give</i> (which is its most common meaning; but it also means <i>ascribe</i>). this is the most common way to interpret this verse:</p>	<p>NLV: Give to the Lord, O families of the nations, give to the Lord the honor and strength that He should have.</p> <p>Complete Apostles' Bible: Bring to the Lord, you families of the Gentiles, bring to the Lord glory and honor. <i>To bring</i> is a legitimate translation of this verb.</p> <p>Easy English Bible: Say to the LORD, you families of nations, say to the LORD that he is glorious and powerful. The key to their translation is a complete simplification of the words used, so they use <i>to say</i> instead of <i>to ascribe</i>.</p> <p>The Scriptures 1998: Ascribe to יהוה, O clans of the peoples, Ascribe to יהוה esteem and strength.</p>
<p>Translate the same verb in two different ways in order for each phrase to be complete and to make sense:</p>	<p>Kukis moderately literal: Grant to Y^ehowah the families of [various] nations; ascribe [or grant] to Y^ehowah glory and strength [or, majesty]. What should be quite obvious is, <i>we cannot give to Jehovah glory and strength</i>. Therefore, another different understanding of this verb is called for. The other approach is to use an alternative meaning for <i>strength, refuge</i>.</p>

Obviously, most of the translations attempted to be consistent (nothing wrong with that) and several of them just altered the language or meanings enough to make a coherent thought. These translations which are mostly paraphrased are easy to read and to understand, but the reason for that is, they often change the meaning of a verse in order to make it easy to read and understand. Now, I have mellowed over the years as to my attitude toward these *thought-for-thought* translations, and they are quite good for personal Bible reading, but not nearly as good when it comes to Bible study. You do not want to cite a litany of *proof texts* from paraphrase versions which are simply incorrectly translated.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Our verse reads: Grant to Y^ehowah the families of [various] nations; ascribe [or, grant] to Y^ehowah glory and strength [or, majesty].

Translations and Interpretations of Psalm 96:7 Part II

Commentator	Commentary
Barnes	<p><i>Give unto the Lord - Ascribe unto the Lord - to Yahweh, O you kindreds of the people - Hebrew, "Families" of the people: people, as united by family ties. The idea is that of worship not merely as individuals, nor as a mere "aggregate" of individuals united by no common bonds, but as those united by strong ties; bound by blood and affection; constituted into communities. It is a call on such to worship God in their capacity as thus bound together; to come as families and to worship God. In other words, it is a call on families "as such" to acknowledge God. A family is a proper place where to honor God. When the same joy pervades all hearts in prosperity, and when all are alike made sorrowful in adversity, there is an evident fitness that all should unite in the same worship of God; and that, as in all other things they have common interests, sympathies, and affections, so they should have in religion - in the service of their Creator.</i></p> <p><i>Give unto the Lord glory and strength - That is, Proclaim that these belong to God; or, worship him as a God of glory and power.³⁴</i></p>
Gill	<p><i>Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people,.... Or families: the Targum reads, "give unto the Lord a song, ye families of the people;" by whom are meant not the tribes and families of the people of Israel, but the Gentiles, the nations of the world, who were to be blessed in the seed of Abraham, the family of Egypt, and others (see Amos 3:2 Zech. 14:17), even such as were chosen of them, taken out from among them for a people to his name; who were redeemed out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; and were taken, one of a city, and two of a family, and brought to Zion: give to the Lord glory and strength.³⁵ Gill only addresses to whom these commands are directed.</i></p>
Henry	<p><i>Heretofore, though in every nation those that feared God and wrought righteousness were accepted of him, yet instituted ordinances were the peculiarities of the Jewish religion; but, in gospel-times, the kindreds of the people shall be invited and admitted into the service of God and be as welcome as ever the Jews were. The court of the Gentiles shall no longer be an outward court, but shall be laid in common with the court of Israel.³⁶ Like Gill above, Henry focuses primarily on to whom these commands are given.</i></p>
Jamieson, Fausset and Brown	<p><i>We are to give—or, "ascribe" (Psalm 29:1) due honor to Him, by acts of appointed and solemn worship in His house.³⁷</i></p>
Spurgeon	<p><i>"Give unto the Lord glory and strength," that is to say, recognize the glory and power of Jehovah, and ascribe them unto him in your solemn hymns. Who is glorious but the Lord? Who is strong, save our God? You great nations, who count yourselves both famous and mighty, cease your boastings! You monarchs, who are styled imperial and puissant, humble yourselves in the dust before the only Potentate. Glory and strength are nowhere to be found, save with the Lord, all others possess but the semblance thereof. Well did Massillon declare, "God alone is great."³⁸</i></p>

³⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:7 (slightly edited).

³⁵ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:7 (slightly edited).

³⁶ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:7 (slightly edited).

³⁷ *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Psalm 96:7 (slightly edited).

³⁸ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 96:7.

All the peoples of the earth are given to our Lord for judgment and to save. We can ascribe to the Lord glory (this is His place as King of Kings), and strength, as He has the power to save and the power to judge. This same approach will be seen in the verses which follow.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Even though I am about half way through this psalm, I am still struggling with the outline and the organization, which impacts—particularly in psalms—the meaning of this chapter, the logical flow, and any parallelisms. There are some individual aspects to this psalm (Jesus being named; the orbit of the earth) which are striking; however, with the proper organization, I believe there is more to be plumbed from it.

Just as we began this psalm with 3 identical imperatives (*sing to the Lord*), we also have 3 identical imperatives (*ascribe to the Lord*) in vv. 7–8a. These two sets of imperatives do stand out and suggest they are in parallel with one another.

**Give to Y^howah glory of His name;
bring a [tribute] offering and go to His courts.**

Psalm
96:8

**Ascribe to Y^howah the honor of His name;
bring a tribute offering [to Him] and enter into
His villages [or, courts].**

**Ascribe to the name of Jehovah glory and honor;
bring a tribute offering to Him when you enter into His villages.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Give to Y ^h owah glory of His name; bring a [tribute] offering and go to His courts.
Septuagint	Bring to the Lord the glory [becoming] his name: take offerings, and go into his courts.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	He is wonderful! Praise him and bring an offering into his temple.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Praise the LORD's glorious name; bring an offering and come into his Temple.
<i>The Message</i>	Bring gifts and celebrate,...
New Century Version	Praise the glory of the Lord's name. Bring an offering and come into his Temple courtyards.
New Life Version	Give to the Lord the honor of His name. Bring a gift and come into His holy place.
New Living Translation	Give to the Lord the glory he deserves! Bring your offering and come into his courts.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Give to the Lord the glory of his name; take with you an offering and come into his house.
Easy English (Churchyard)	Say that the *LORD has a glorious name. Bring a gift and come near his house.

God's Word™ Give to the LORD the glory he deserves. Bring an offering, and come into his courtyards.

JPS (Tanakh) Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name, bring tribute and enter His courts.

NET Bible® Ascribe to the LORD the splendor he deserves! [Hebrew "the splendor of (i.e., "due") his name."] Bring an offering and enter his courts!

The Scriptures 1998 Ascribe to יהוה the esteem of His Name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated *Emphasized Bible* Give to Yahweh, the glory of His Name, Bring a present and enter His courts [some codices and Aramaic read, *enter before Him*; see 1Chron. 16:29].

English Standard Version Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts!

MKJV Give to Jehovah the glory *due to* His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts.

Young's Literal Translation Ascribe to Jehovah the honour of His name, Lift up a present and come in to His courts.

What is the gist of this verse? We are to ascribe to God the glory which is due His name and to bring an offering when we come into His courts (to be explained more fully in the exegesis).

Psalm 96:8a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâhab (יָהַב) [pronounced yaw-HAWB ^v]	<i>to give, to give here; to grant, to permit; to provide [with reflexive]; to place, to put to set; to ascribe</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #3051 BDB #396
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
kâbôwd (כְּבוֹד) [pronounced kaw ^b -VODE]	<i>glory, abundance, honor</i>	masculine singular adjective in the construct form	Strong's #3519 BDB #458
Owen calls this a masculine singular noun.			
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

Translation: *Ascribe to Y^ehowah the honor of His name;...* Although Owen presents kâbôwd as a masculine singular construct, there is actually no difference in the Hebrew apart from the vowel points, which were added hundreds of years after the Hebrew was written down. This is why many translators render this, *Ascribe to Jehovah the glory [due] His name*. To the believers in the Old Testament, His name is Jehovah Elohim; however,

to believers in the New Testament, His name is Jesus. As we have already observed, in the Hebrew, this psalm has already said, **Sing to Y^ehowah, praise [or, celebrate] His name; every day, announce [the good news] of His deliverance [or, proclaim His Jesus]**. Jesus is the name of our Jehovah, and the name of Jesus is to be honored glorified above all other names. The name of Jehovah Elohim is Jesus, a name to be honored above all other names. Philip. 2:9–11 reads: **Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.** Do you see just how alike the Old and New Testaments are? Do you see just how well they complement one another?

There is also a parallel with this and the first part of the psalm. We began with 3 imperatives, all the same word; and the second part of this psalm began with 3 imperatives all the same word. In the 1st part of this psalm, after the 3 imperatives, it speaks of His name and in this verse, we speak of His name.

In your mind as in mine, there are perhaps some gaps. However, it should be clear that, God is not asking to be glorified because He needs the attention. God is focusing us upon our Lord, the One Who saved us, the Jesus who is the Savior of all mankind. He is the only true celebrity in this world. We ought to glorify Him and point toward Him—not in some way where we ecstatically cry out, “Praise Jesus” to an extent that it frightens children, but that our focus is upon Him rather than upon ourselves or upon any there human celebrity.

Okay, *why?* *Why should be draw attention to Jesus as the only Celebrity?* We ought to do so not only because we have been redeemed but so that others might know Him as well. This is why He should be exalted in our lives, which involves a lot more than running around inserting, *praise Jesus* and *Lord willing* into our every conversation.

As you may know, I have some strong political views and I have interests in specific candidates. I definitely prefer one candidate over the other candidates in this race for the 2008 presidential election. However, I must always recognize that, no matter what happens, my focus should be upon our Lord, even if this is transferred into some sort of nanny state where the state takes care of each and everyone of us (oh when will the government provide free legal insurance?). However, Jesus Christ controls history, and He knew every single event that would transpire up to the point in time, and He will bring into office the candidate who is appropriate for our country. Jesus Christ is the only true celebrity in this life and He should be our focus, regardless of how screwed up our government becomes. **Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

Psalm 96:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâsâ' (נָסָא) [pronounced naw-SAW]	<i>to lift up, to bear, to carry</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5375 (and #4984) BDB #669
<p>Nâsâ' actually has a variety of Qal meanings: It means ❶ <i>to take up, to lift up, to bear up</i>; ❷ <i>to lift up someone's head</i> (this is used in a favorable way; i.e., it is mused to mean <i>to make one cheerful or merry</i>; ❸ <i>to lift up one's own countenance, i.e., to be cheerful, full of confidence</i>, ❹ <i>to bear, to carry</i>, ❺ <i>to lift up in a balance, i.e., to weigh carefully</i>; ❻ <i>to bear one's sin or punishment</i>, ❼ <i>to lift up the voice</i> (this can be used in the sense of bemoaning, crying, crying out, rejoicing, <i>to lift up any with the voice</i> (a song, an instrument); ❽ <i>to lift up the soul</i> (i.e., <i>to wish for, to desire</i>); ❾ <i>to have the heart lifted up</i> (i.e., they are ready and willing to do something); ❿ <i>to bear one's sin</i> (in such a way to expiate the sin, to make atonement for the sin, to pardon the sin). This list does not exhaust the various connotations for nâsâ'.</p>			
min ^e châh (מִנְחָה) [pronounced min-HAWH]	<i>tribute offering, gift, present; sacrifice, bloodless offering; [a general term for] offering</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4503 BDB #585

Translation: ...bring a tribute offering [to Him]... The tribute offering that we bring to Him—the bloodless offering which we bring to Him—is our faith. Our faith is worth nothing in and of itself. Every person has faith in something; in fact, in most things. It is said that 80–95% of everything that we know is based upon faith (I think that it is probably a higher percentage than that). Even in the simplest things: we all believe that England, France, Israel, China, Australia, and Saudi Arabia all exist, even though few of us have been to all of these countries. Those of us who know a little geography, can look upon a map and identify these countries and we believe that we know their relative size and location—all of which is a matter of faith. Now, certainly, it is logical that these things are true, but again, our faith is resting, ultimately, upon things being reasonable and logical; that such grand hoaxes (e.g., people pretending that there is a country called England when there really is not such a country), are just entirely out of the realm of probability. Everything is resting firmly upon faith. I am presently reading a book about the reality of evolution as opposed to the failure of creationism, and the author believes strongly in the ability of students to be able to distinguish between junk science and real science, and somehow believes that this leads him to the conclusion that creationism should not be taught in schools. To me, if such a thing were such a foregone conclusion, then teaching creationism in the schools would not be problematic, as the high school students could easily distinguish between true science and junk science. It is faith, and this man has very strong faith. He admits that the sequence and the biological processes involved in evolution are strongly disputed, but the *fact* of evolution is not. *Ask any scientist*, he might say for confirmation. To him, evolution is as real and as true as any chemical experiment which we could perform a million times with the same outcome each and every time, even though when you get to specifics, there is a great deal of disagreement.

We all have faith and we place our faith in a variety of things: the goodness of man, the evil of man, that all men can be reasoned with, that few men can truly be reasoned with, that our world is on course, that our world is going to hell in a handbasket. We have faith, and our faith in His name is what we bring to God.

Faith is a non-meritorious form of perception, and all people have a huge amount of faith. Faith in and of itself means nothing; the object of our faith is what carries all of the merit, and this is Jesus, the name above every other name, a name which we ought to honor.

I am of two opinions as to what this tribute offering actually is. (1) the offering which we bring is our Lord Himself. It is his sacrifice which has all of the merit. There is no merit in our faith, as all men have great faith. All of the merit is in His offering on our behalf, His death for our sins. (2) However, since this is a bloodless offering, perhaps what is meant by our tribute offering is, our faith. Here is the opinion of others.

What Tribute Offering Do We Bring?	
Commentator	The Tribute Offering
Barnes	<i>Bring to God what is due to him; or, render such an acknowledgment as he deserves and claims. Acknowledge him as God, and acknowledge him to be such a God as he is. Let the honor due to God as such be given him; and let the honor due to him, for the character which he actually has, be ascribed to him.</i> ³⁹
Henry	<i>We must bring an offering into his courts. We must bring ourselves, in the first place, the offering up of the Gentiles (Rom. 15:16). We must offer up the sacrifices of praise continually (Heb. 13:15), must often appear before God in public worship and never appear before him empty.</i> ⁴⁰
Kukis	The offering we bring to Him is either our soul response to Him (this is phase II of the Christian life) or the faith which we bring, which He credits to us as righteousness (it is this faith which is counted as righteousness, and our means to attain salvation—phase I in the Christian life).

³⁹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:8.

⁴⁰ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:8.

What Tribute Offering Do We Bring?

Commentator	The Tribute Offering
Spurgeon	<p><i>“Bring an offering, and come into his courts.” Come with an unbloody sacrifice; atonement for sin having been made, it only remains to bring thank-offerings, and let not these be forgotten. To him who gives us all, we ought gladly to give our grateful tithe. When assembling for public worship we should make a point of bringing with us a contribution to his cause, according to that ancient word, “None of you shall appear before me empty.” The time will come when from all ranks and all nations the Lord will receive gifts when they gather together for his worship.⁴¹</i></p>

Often my point in some of these charts, where the opinions of commentators are put side-by-side, is to show that there are times when they really do not have a lot to offer on this or that verse.

I left out Gill because he blathered on about how this psalm belongs to the *gospel age*, which is the weakest aspect of his commentary. However, I will include this below, without editing, so that you can easily see how little Clarke brings to the table with regards to this verse:

bring an offering, and come into his courts; not ceremonial sacrifices, which are abolished under the Gospel dispensation, to which times this psalm belongs; but either the saints themselves, their bodies, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice, and especially the sacrifices of a broken heart, with as much of their substance as is necessary for the relief of the poor, the support of the ministry, and the carrying on of the cause and interest of the Redeemer: the allusion is to the law that enjoined the Israelites not to appear empty before the Lord; but everyone to bring his gift according to his ability, Deu_16:16, or else their sacrifices of prayer and praise, which are the spiritual sacrifices of the Gospel dispensation, and are to be offered by the saints, as priests, to God through Christ; or rather the sacrifice of Christ himself, which is of a sweet smelling savour to God, makes way for access unto him, and acceptance with him; and which should be brought in the arms of faith, when they enter into the house of the Lord, and attend his word and ordinances; for, through this, their persons and services become acceptable to God, and the sins of their holy things are taken away.⁴²

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

It is possible that Spurgeon makes a point here that we bring God some sort of offering as a *response* to what He has done for us. It is not in exchange, it is not a way of paying back, it is just a soul response. At one time, I had a lady friend who was rather poor. Most of the presents which I received from her were very inexpensive presents, but they represented a soul response—she put a great deal of thought into what she gave me. For this reason, I greatly appreciated what she gave to me. Now, I understand that, for most people, given our day and times, there is only so much thought which you can put into this or that present, so there are only a handful of presents which represent a soul response. Now, when it comes to God, you ought to recognize just how puny and how little we are actually able to bring Him. [The cattle on a thousand hills are His](#) (Psalm 50:10b); so what can we bring Him? If you understand all that God has give us (which we may never fully appreciate) and when we recognize that all there is, He possesses, do you see how your offering which you dump into an offering plate—sometimes in some sort of a trade-out with God—do you see how meaningless and how little this offering is, unless it is a soul response? I gave the example of this former girl friend; she had a very small amount of money, but she did not just buy the first thing that she saw which fit into her budget. What I received was a wonderful soul response, and what you give to God ought to be a soul response to Him.

⁴¹ Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *A Treasury of David*; e-Sword, Psalm 96:8.

⁴² Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:8.

Psalm 96:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #935 BDB #97
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
chatsêrîym (מִיְרִיחַ) [pronounced khah-tzah-REEM]	enclosures, courts; settlements, villages, towns	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2691 & #2699 BDB #346

This refers to the few settlements which are scattered around a city.

Translation: ...and enter into His villages [or, courts]. Here, we have to read what is found here: this noun is found in the plural, not the singular. Therefore, we are not speaking of entering into the Temple, the Tabernacle, the outer courtyard, etc. God has, apparently, a number of living areas for us to enter into. "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you." (John 14:2). Our faith in His name will give us entry into His living areas.

We find this same word in Psalm 100:4, which seems to indicate a generalized place where we live with God. The entirety of Psalm 100 reads: Make a joyful noise to Jehovah, all you lands. Worship Jehovah with gladness; come before His presence with singing. Know that Jehovah, He is God. He has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For Jehovah is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endures to all generations. There seems to be almost a universal message here—all you lands—and yet it is very specific, speaking of His people and the sheep of His pasture. I believe that the general concept is that of life with God. Just as sheep are out to pasture for much of the day, the shepherd brings them in through the gates and they remain safe and secure within the pens (courts) designed for them by the shepherd.

Others also have opinions as to what the courts are here.

What Courts Do We Enter into?	
Scripture	Incident
Barnes	The courts or areas around the tabernacle and the temple, where sacrifices were made, and where the people worshipped. ⁴³ Bear in mind that when this was originally written, there was no Temple and there were no court yards (with the Tabernacle, there was one large courtyard).
Clarke	Come into His courts - Probably referring to the second temple. The reference must be either to the tabernacle or temple. ⁴⁴

⁴³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:8.

⁴⁴ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:8.

What Courts Do We Enter into?

Scripture	Incident
Kukis	I believe the <i>villages</i> or <i>courts</i> named here are the dwelling places which we will have for all eternity, which are also mentioned in John 14:2. Another option is, this simply refers to living with God, in much the same way that the sheep are brought into their pens (the idea is about the same).
Spurgeon	Given Spurgeon's explanation for the offering, he apparently see the churches as the <i>courts</i> spoken of here.

I refer to about a dozen commentaries as a backup, and always credit them for what they have to offer. As you can see, in this passage, they had very little to offer.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The verse reads: **Ascribe to Y^ehowah the honor of His name; bring a tribute offering [to Him] and enter into His villages [or, courts].** Let me summarize what is being said here:

Psalm 96:8 Explained

1. Ascribing honor to Jehovah or ascribing the honor of His name to Jehovah means that we recognize Who and What Jesus Christ is.
2. *Name*, in the Hebrew, refers to one's character, essence, and reputation. Jesus Christ, in His humanity, was perfect in all respects, and we are called upon to honor His character.
3. What our Lord did for us was beyond anything that we could imagine; we are called upon by the psalmist to recognize and honor Him for this.
4. We are called upon to bring a tribute offering to Him, which refers to a bloodless offering.
 - a. In phase I of the Christian life, we bring non-meritorious faith to Him. Jesus Christ did all of the work. He paid the penalty for our sins. All we can do is bring simple faith in Him, for our salvation. That is our offering.
 - b. In the Christian life, after we have been saved, we bring offerings to Him, which may include our service and they may be what we drop into the offering place. This offering is a soul response for what Jesus has done for us.
5. Entering into His villages can have a threefold meaning.
 - a. In phase I, we believe in Jesus Christ and we are brought into His life, as new creatures in Christ.
 - b. In phase II, we enjoy Ig and all of the provisions which He has made on our behalf.
 - c. In phase II, we enter into His living areas which He has prepared for us.

The Christian life is broken down into 3 phases: Phase I is salvation; Phase II is the Christian way of life; and Phase III is eternity.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

I believe that I can pull together the first and second parts of this psalm, as there are enough parallels, but I will cover the next verse first.

**Bow down to Y^ehowah in adornment of holiness;
tremble in His faces, all the earth.**

Psalm
96:9

**Prostrate yourselves toward [or, bow down to] Y^ehowah in the beauty of holiness [or, in holy clothing];
tremble before Him, all the earth.**

**Fall down and do obeisance to Jehovah in the beauty of His holiness;
tremble before Him, all the earth.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Adore the Lord in His holy <u>court</u> . Let all the earth be moved at his presence.
Masoretic Text	Bow down to Y ^e howah in adornment of holiness; tremble in His faces, all the earth.
Peshitta	O worship the LORD in the <u>temple</u> of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth.
Septuagint	Kneel before the Lord in his holy <u>court</u> [<u>palace; open area of a house</u>]; let all the earth tremble before Him.

Significant differences: The only problem is *where* we are to knee before or bow down to Jehovah (or in what state of adornment or mind we are to be in). In the Hebrew, we can interpret that we are to be in some sort of holy clothing when we bow before Him; or that we ought to bow before Him in *the beauty of holiness* (whatever that means). The Greek and Latin tell us to do this in some sort of a holy open area—an outside court, an area of the house where there is no roof. The Peshitta (the English text) identifies this as the *holy Temple*. I think that we can reject the Peshitta reading because no Temple exists at this time, except in the mind of David. We will discuss the other ideas within the exegesis below. However, allow me to point out that few translations went with the Greek on this one.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Everyone on earth, now tremble and worship the LORD, majestic and holy."
Good News Bible (TEV)	Bow down before the Holy One when he appears; tremble before him, all the earth!
<i>The Message</i>	Bow before the beauty of GOD, Then to your knees--everyone worship!
New Century Version	Worship the Lord because he is holy. Tremble before him, everyone on earth.
New Life Version	Worship the Lord in holy clothing. May all the earth shake in fear before Him.
New Living Translation	Worship the Lord in all his holy splendor. Let all the earth tremble before him.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	O give worship to the Lord in holy robes; be in fear before him, all the earth.
Easy English (Churchyard)	Fall down in front of the *LORD who is beautiful and *holy. Be afraid of him, everyone (that lives) on the earth.
JPS (Tanakh)	Bow down to the LORD majestic in holiness; tremble in His presence, all the earth!
NET Bible®	Worship the LORD in holy attire [Or "in holy splendor."] Tremble before him, all the earth!
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	Bow yourselves to יהוה, In the splendour of set-apartness! Tremble before Him, all the earth.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; tremble before and reverently fear Him, all the earth.
Updated <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	Bow down to Yahweh in the adornment of holiness [or, <i>in holy adorning</i>],

MKJV	Be I anguish at His presence, all the earth!
A Voice in the Wilderness	O worship Jehovah in the beauty of holiness; fear before Him, all the earth. O bow down before Jehovah in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth.
WEB	Worship Yahweh in holy array. Tremble before him, all the earth.
Young's Literal Translation	Bow yourselves to Jehovah, In the honour of holiness, Be afraid of His presence, all the earth.

What is the gist of this verse? We are called upon to worship God; and all of the earth will tremble before Him.

Psalm 96:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
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>	2 nd person masculine plural, Hithpael imperative	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
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
hădârâh (הַדָּרָה) [pronounced huh-daw-RAW]	<i>ornament, adornment, clothing [worn at priestly festivals]; beauty; glory, honor, majesty</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1927 BDB #214
In the Greek and Latin, this is <i>an open court; a portion of the house without a roof.</i>			
qôdesh (קֹדֶשׁ) [pronounced koh-DESH]	<i>holiness, sacredness, apartness, that which is holy, holy things</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6944 BDB #871

Translation: Prostrate yourselves toward [or, bow down to] Y^ehowah in the beauty of holiness [or, in holy clothing];... When it comes to some form of exterior worship in the Old Testament, it is primarily forward-looking and representative of something. Here, one possible rendering of this phrase is, **Bow down before Jehovah in holy clothing.** This could certainly be seen as meaningful, as Adam and Eve were properly covered (with the skin of an animal), and the priests had an outfit that they were to wear when performing their priestly duties; and we could no doubt speak of how the Old Testament saints were *covered* until our Lord came and gave Himself or us. The only problem with this approach is, this seems to be more of a universal command, and we do not have any sort of a holy outfit demanded in the Old Testament for all worshipers. Therefore, we need to reject that translation (which is a valid rendering of the Hebrew).

The Greek and Latin both have the worshiper being required to worship in some specific area—an open courtyard or an open area as a part of the house. However, there is no such requirement found elsewhere in Scripture, so we may reasonably reject that approach.

The Hebrew may be translated, [Bow down before Jehovah in holy clothing](#). In the Old Testament, the priest did have specific clothes which he was to wear; however, for the hoi polloi, there were no such requirements. Therefore, if we are to understand this phrase, it should not be taken literally. We may reasonably take this metaphorically; that is, to mean that we are covered in a way which sets us apart. This is a true doctrine of the Old Testament. Before our Lord died in time for our sins, redemption was based upon a promise that He would, in the future, pay for our sins. So, believers prior to our Lord's crucifixion were said to be covered. The word we find in the KJV is *atonement* (kâphar = כָּפַר), which means *to cover over*. So, we might interpret this to mean that those who come to worship, are to do so, covered in holy clothing—i.e., *atoned for*. This sort of symbolism goes back to the garden where Adam and Eve first sinned. They covered themselves with fig leaves (or, whatever kind of leaves), which did not cover their sins (it probably covered the genitalia reasonably well). Jesus Christ killed an animal—the first animal ever killed—and its skin was used to cover them. This from the very beginning taught that our sins would be covered over by His sacrifice.

Another way to understand this is: [Bow down before Jehovah in the beauty of holiness](#). This phrase actually does have some meaning, although it may not be clear at first. I spent nearly 30 years as a math teacher, and I did not major in mathematics because I love numbers and math—it just came easy to me (relatively easy). What I did develop in school and as a teacher, was a great appreciation for the beauty and symmetry and logic of mathematics. Like the universe, in mathematics, you could go in all directions and it was never ending—but it retained a great beauty and consistency to it, no matter what direction you go in mathematics.

Allow me to digress here: most people equivocate numbers and arithmetic with mathematics, as that is just about as far as they went with it. Even when they took Algebra and Geometry, the teacher focused too much on numerical calculations. However, mathematics goes far beyond arithmetic. Arithmetic to mathematics is like a tide pool is to the Pacific ocean—arithmetic is only a minuscule part of mathematics. Most PhD programs in mathematics require a student to develop a new field of mathematics. When I taught honors geometry, I required my students to develop a geometry relative to a sphere, cone, cylinder or cube—and even though I had perhaps 100 students develop geometry relative to a sphere, they were all different in their approach and development. When one understands the rules for developing a mathematical system, the internal consistency, what is out there for the human mind to develop is quite beautiful if not awe-inspiring.

The more we know about God—the more we understand His Word—the more we recognize the beauty of His holiness. As a child, I knew the story of Adam and Eve, and I retained a few of these details until I became a believer in Jesus Christ. Then, when I had these details properly laid out and explained to me, all of a sudden, a whole new world opened up to me. One of my interests in Scripture is, the careful parallels set up by God in the Old Testament to tell us what would happen in the New. One could read the Old Testament by itself, and it would have great meaning and significance, although, now and again, one might become a bit confused (why was the final sin of Moses such a big deal, for instance?). But, when we get to the New Testament, and then look back at the Old, all of a sudden, a whole new world opens up—a system which is logical, internally consistent, marvelous to behold, and, yes, beautiful.

The more we know about God—and we know Him through His Word—the more we can be impressed by His perfection, His holiness and the beauty of it all.

Internal logic is a beautiful thing. Consistency is a beautiful thing. In the political realm, this is important to some (like me) and of no importance to others. I recall listening to the Democratic candidates speaking in Nevada, and how they deplored some mountain which was apparently used to store nuclear waste and how this just was not going to happen under their watch. Now, this sort of a promise is absolutely foolish. Nuclear waste is going to have to be put somewhere; it is a fact of life. Furthermore, the more it gets moved around, from one site to another, the more likely there is to be an accident. It is inconsistent and insincere to pretend to deplore a nuclear waste spot if you have no real alternative.

One great area of inconsistency with the left is their view of nuclear power—they hate it. It is one of the great evils in this world. However, these same people blame big oil and energy consumption for global warming. Had our coal and oil burning electric plans been replaced with nuclear energy, then we in the US would have thrown much

less CO₂ into the atmosphere. However, do you see left-leaning activists carrying signs, “More Nukes”? Of course not. They are still in opposition to nuclear plants (for the most part). There is no consistency here; and there is no beauty.

Another area of inconsistency with the left. A presidential candidate has talked about invading one of our allies and taking out Osama Bin Laden if we had actionable intelligence, and many of his supporters think this is fine. However, at the same time, he and his supporters think that water-boarding is this incredible evil form of torture, despite the fact that it has only been used 4 times on 3 different men. So, it is okay to kill these people, even if such action involves us invading a friendly foreign country, but pouring water on the heads of these same men is going to far? The inconsistencies are absolutely mind-boggling. Yet, such people will speak with great passion on both issues (rarely at the same time).

God is consistent and this consistency is beautiful. His Word is consistent, and the parallels drawn from beginning to end are beautiful.

Back to our passage: **Prostrate yourselves toward** [or, *bow down to*] **Y^ehowah in the beauty of holiness** [or, *in holy clothing*]:... At least one commentator (Clarke) applies this to the High Priest wearing his holy garb when bringing a sacrifice before God,⁴⁵ but the problem is, the imperative here is a 2nd person masculine **plural**, which means that it is addressed to more than one man. It is reasonable that the psalmist intended to evoke images of the high priest bringing an offering before God, but this is still addressed to many—in fact, to *all the earth*, as we see in the next phrase. Therefore, even though in the back of our minds, we see the High Priest in his holy clothing approaching God and bowing down before Him with a tribute offering; we still must recognize that this command is to all the earth, and interpret this verse accordingly.

It may also be worth pointing out that the majestic beauty of the earth and all of the universe has all comes from the hand of God. God may be closely associated with beauty and symmetry, and things which are awe-inspiring. In my years, I have known men who could rebuild a bathroom, but only some of them could rebuild it in such a way as to be aesthetically pleasing. God is capable in this realm, to design and to create things which beauty inspires man. There have been millions of painters and artisans who have viewed a sunset, a field of flowers, the view of an ocean or lake, the image of a mountain off in the distance, or the human form, and have been inspired to try to be able to transfer this beauty to the canvas or to a block of marble.

For those who reject God and reject His holiness, are also rejecting all the beauty which He has created. You may think that you will be happier in hell with all of your associates, but bear in mind, there will be no beauty, there will be no symmetry, there will be no happiness, there will be no pleasant stimulation of any sort—it will be darkness and fire and the gnashing of teeth and crying out in pain. All it takes to avoid all of that is to believe in Jesus Christ—nothing more and nothing less.

Psalm 96:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
chûwl (חול) [pronounced <i>khool</i>]	<i>turn, turn around, writhe [in pain]; be twisted; tremble, fear</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #2342 BDB #296
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

⁴⁵ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:9.

Psalm 96:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pānîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>before him, before his face, in his presence, in his sight, in front of him.</i>			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿerets (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 with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...tremble before Him, all the earth. Understanding all that God has done and is doing is an impossibility. We can barely get a clue as to a few details here or there. However, His power should be clear to us, and all the earth, believers and unbelievers, Jews and Gentiles, should tremble before Him.

Let's summarize Psalm 96:9, which reads: **Prostrate yourselves toward [or, bow down to] Y^ehowah in the beauty of holiness [or, in holy clothing]; tremble before Him, all the earth.**

A Summary of Psalm 96:9

1. Psalm 96:9 is addressed to all of the earth; this is not meant for a few here or there, or even for just the Jews, but for all the earth.
2. There are two false views of Psalm 96:9:
 - a. The Greek reads **Prostrate yourselves toward [or, bow down to] Y^ehowah in an open court of holiness...** At the time that this was written, there was no Temple and there apparently was no functioning Tabernacle. Therefore, the original writing of this psalm probably did not read that this was some sort of a holy court. It is possible that these words were slightly adjusted when the Israelites returned from their captivity and that they sang this psalm while building the new Temple. This is possible, and may account for this tradition being preserved in the Septuagint text. However, this is not necessarily the interpretation we should hold with, given the surrounding text, which appears to point to a universal appeal to men throughout the earth.
 - b. Another reading would be **Prostrate yourselves toward [or, bow down to] Y^ehowah in the holy clothing...** This is a legitimate translation, and causes us to think about the high priest and his holy adornment which he wore. However, the imperative is directed toward many people, not just one. Therefore, even if the imagery of the high priest in his holy garb comes to mind—and even if that was intentional on the part of the psalmist—this is not a passage to be applied to just one man.
3. Therefore, this verse calls upon all of us to **bow before Jehovah in the beauty of His holiness**, God's perfection, His perfect righteousness, His justice, His consistency, and the beauty of His creation should cause each one of us to bow before Him.
4. With all that He has done, and given His great power (He created the heavens; and we will see that He maintains the orbit of the earth), we should be moved to **tremble before Him**. God could have, at any point in time, decided, "This is a damned mess; I am going to destroy it all and begin again." We, in and of ourselves, have nothing to offer God. God does not look down on us and say, "Hey, there's Charley Brown. Now I was going to wipe out the earth, but he is such a helluva nice guy, that I cannot help bu

A Summary of Psalm 96:9

like him.” We are not that likeable. We have nothing to offer God. His graciousness toward us is a blessing and completely undeserved. Understanding who and what we are before God, and understanding Who and What God is, should cause us to tremble before Him.

The same God who could destroy this earth in a second is also the God Who died for our sins, to make us holy in Christ before Him.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

**Say in the peoples, “Y^ehowah has reigned;
in fact, firmly established earth
—she is not shaken—
He judges peoples in equities.”**

Psalm
96:10

**Say among the peoples [or, *the Gentiles*],
“Y^ehowah reigns [over all];
furthermore, the [entire] earth is firmly
established [by Him]—
it is not tottering [or, *it will not be dislodged; it
will not be thrown into disarray*]—
He judges [all] the peoples with righteous
decisions.”**

**Say to all the people of the earth, “Jehovah reigns over all;
in fact, by Him, the entire earth has been firmly established—
it is not tottering, it will not be dislodged nor will it be thrown into disarray—
He judges all mankind with righteous decisions.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Say in the peoples, “Y ^e howah has reigned; in fact, firmly established earth —she is not shaken— He judges peoples in equities.”
Septuagint	Say among the heathen, The Lord reigns: for He has established the world [so that] it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people in righteousness.
Alternate LXX reading	Say among the nations, the Lord rules by the wood [i.e., <i>the cross</i>]. It is unclear as to what else follows this reading.
Significant differences:	No significant differences. The final Greek word is a singular; the final Hebrew word is a plural, but that particular Hebrew word is always found in the plural. With regards to the alternate LXX reading, I will post a discussion of it by Clarke below.

Clarke gives us a very reasonable run-down on this alternate reading:

Alternate Reading: **The Lord rules by the wood (i.e., *the cross*)...**

Clarke writes the following: Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, quotes this passage thus: **ΕΙΠΑΤΕ
εν τοις εθνεσι, ο΄ Κυριος εβασιλευσε απο του ξυλου**, “Say among the nations, the Lord rules by the wood,”
meaning the cross; and accuses the Jews of having blotted this word out of their Bibles, because of the
evidence it gave of the truth of Christianity. It appears that this reading did exist anciently in the Septuagint, or
at least in some ancient copies of that work, for the reading has been quoted by Tertullian, Lactantius, Arnobius,
Augustine, Cassiodorus, Pope Leo, Gregory of Tours, and others.

Alternate Reading: The Lord rules by the wood (i.e., the cross)...

This reading is still extant in the ancient Roman Psalter, *Dominus regnavit a ligno*, and in some others. In an ancient MS. copy of the Psalter before me, while the text exhibits the commonly received reading, the margin has the following gloss: *Regnavit a ligno crucis*, "The Lord reigns by the wood of the cross." My old Scotico-Latin Psalter has not a *ligno* in the text, but seems to refer to it in the paraphrase: *For Criste regned efter the dede on the crosse*.

It is necessary, however, to add, that no such words exist in any copy of the Hebrew text now extant, nor in any MS. yet collated, nor in any of the ancient Versions. Neither Eusebius nor Jerome even refer to it, who wrote comments on the Psalms; nor is it mentioned by any Greek writer except Justin Martyr.

This is from Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:10 (slightly edited).

Matthew Henry writes: *Some of the ancients added a gloss to this, which by degrees crept into the text, The Lord reigns from the tree (so Justin Martyr, Austin, and others, quote it), meaning the cross, when he had this title written over him, The King of the Jews. It was because he became obedient to death, even the death of the cross, that God exalted him, and gave him a name above every name, a throne above every throne. Some of the heathen came betimes to enquire after him that was born King of the Jews (Matt. 2:2).*

Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:10–13 (slightly edited).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Announce to the nations, "The LORD is King! The world stands firm, never to be shaken, and he will judge its people with fairness."
<i>The Message</i>	Get out the message--GOD Rules! He put the world on a firm foundation; He treats everyone fair and square.
New Century Version	Tell the nations, "The Lord is king." The earth is set, and it cannot be moved. He will judge the people fairly.
New Life Version	Say among the nations that the Lord rules. The world is built to last. It will not be moved. He will be right when He says who is guilty or not.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Say among the nations, The Lord is King; yes, the world is ordered so that it may not be moved; he will be an upright judge of the peoples.
Complete Apostles' Bible	Say among the heathen, The Lord reigns; for He has established the world so that it shall not be moved; He shall judge the people in righteousness.
Easy English (Churchyard)	Tell all the *nations that the *LORD is King! (He has) fixed the world so that nothing can move it. He will be a fair *judge of the people.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	Say to the nations, "The LORD rules as king!" The earth stands firm; it cannot be moved. He will judge people fairly.
JPS (Tanakh)	Declare among the nations, "The LORD is king!" the world stands firm; it cannot be shaken, He judges the peoples with equity.
NET Bible®	Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! The world is established, it cannot be moved. He judges the nations fairly."

The Scriptures 1998

Say among nations, “הוהי shall reign. The world also is established, immovable. He judges the peoples in straightness.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	Say among the nations, “Yahweh has become King. Surely He has fixed [so it should be; as per the Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate] the world. It will not be shaken.
English Standard Version	Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity."
New King James Version	Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns; The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously."
A Voice in the Wilderness	Say among the nations, Jehovah reigns; the world also is firmly established, it shall not be shaken; He shall judge the peoples with equity.
Young's Updated LT	Say among nations, “Jehovah has reigned, Also—established is the world, [it is] unmoved, He judges the peoples in uprightness.”

What is the gist of this verse? God establishes the earth so that it cannot be shaken out of its orbit; and with this same power and righteousness, He judges all the people.

Psalm 96:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #559 BDB #55
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
gôwyîm (גוֹיִם) [pronounced goh-YEEM]	<i>Gentiles, [Gentile] nation, people, peoples, nations</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1471 BDB #156
YHWH (הוהי) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
mâlak ^e (מָלַךְ) [pronounced maw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to reign, to become king or queen</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4427 BDB #573

Owen has a question mark after the masculine singular.

Translation: Say among the peoples [or, the Gentiles], “Y^ehowah reigns [over all];... An example of the extent of God's control over all is now given in this verse. Again, the emphasis is that, this is not just a national God that Israel worships. Throughout this psalm, there are appeals made to those outside of Israel; therefore, there must be universal reasons given for those outside of Israel to believe in Jehovah Elohim.

Notice again that *Jehovah reigns* is to be said among the Gentiles. Given that this is a psalm from David's era, it is clear that the God of the Jews was to be proclaimed throughout the world as the God Who reigned over all.

When moving the Jews out of Egypt, God did some very spectacular things so that all the world (at least, the surrounding nations for hundreds of miles) would be aware of the power of the God of the Jews.

Although evangelism does not appear to be codified in the Torah (the Law of Moses), we find it throughout the Old Testament:

Old Testament Calls to Evangelize the Gentiles	
Passage	Reading/Comments
Psalm 2:7–12	I will declare the decree of Jehovah. He has said to Me, You are My Son; today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I shall give the nations for Your inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. And now be wise, O kings; be instructed, O judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled in but a little time. Blessed are all who put their trust in Him. Although the inevitability of God's rule over the earth is found here, David includes the gospel message, Blessed are all those who place their trust in Him.
Psalm 18:48–50	He delivers me from my enemies; yea, You lift me up from among those rising up against me. You have delivered me from the violent man. On account of this I will extol You, O Jehovah, among the nations, and I will sing praises to Your name, magnifying salvation to His king, and working mercy to His anointed, to David and to his Seed forever. What might be an interesting study—if there are even verses on it—is exactly <i>how</i> David exalted Jehovah among the nations.
Psalm 46:6–10	The nations raged, the kingdoms were shaken; He uttered His voice, the earth melted. Jehovah of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah. Come, behold the works of Jehovah, who makes ruins on the earth; Who makes wars to cease to the ends of the earth; He breaks the bow, and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God! I will be praised among the nations, I will be praised in the earth. This verse obviously looks into the future, when God would be praised among the nations.
Psalm 96:2–4	Sing to Jehovah, bless His name; show forth His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all people. For Jehovah is great, and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. This appears to be directed toward the people at the time of David.
Psalm 96:8–13	Give to Jehovah the glory due to His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts. O worship Jehovah in the beauty of holiness; fear before Him, all the earth. Say among the nations, Jehovah reigns; and the world shall be established; it shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples in uprightness. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness of it. Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it; then shall all the trees of the forest rejoice before Jehovah; for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth. This is very clearly a psalm which teaches current and future evangelism of the Gentiles. David clearly understood the universality of his God.
Psalm 126:1–3	When Jehovah turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then they said among the nations, Jehovah has done great things with them. Great things did Jehovah to work with us and we are glad. God uses the captivity of the Jews to evangelized the Gentiles.

Old Testament Calls to Evangelize the Gentiles

Passage	Reading/Comments
Malachi 1:11–14	For from the rising of the sun even to its going in, My name shall be great among the nations; and everywhere incense shall be offered to My name, and a pure food offering. For My name shall be great among the nations, says Jehovah of Hosts. But you are profaning it when you say, The table of Jehovah, it is polluted; and its fruit, His food, is to be despised. You also said, Behold, what a weariness it is! And you have puffed at it, says Jehovah of Hosts. And you bring plunder, and the lame, and the sick, and you bring the food offering. Should I accept it from your hand, says Jehovah? But cursed be a deceiver; and there is in his flock a male, yet he vows it, but sacrifices to Jehovah a blemished one. For I am a great king, says Jehovah of Hosts, and My name is feared among the nations. This verse looks off into the future.

Paul often writes about his own commission to the Gentiles (which was, at first, clearly his second choice): **But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and having called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the nations, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood; Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those apostles before me, but I went into Arabia and returned again to Damascus** (Gal. 1:15–17).

Most of these passages, or portions of them, were suggested by *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, Psalm 96:10.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

We were already told that God made the heavens; now we will be told things about God's relationship to the earth.

Psalm 96:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾaph (אֵף) [pronounced ahf]	<i>in fact, furthermore, also, yea, even, indeed; even though</i>	a conjunction which signifies <i>addition</i> or <i>emphasis</i>	Strong's #637 BDB #64
This word appears to have two different purposes: (1) A surprise is then mentioned or the unexpected is said. (2) A reference is made to a preceding sentence and it is expanded or emphasized and we would translate this word <i>yea, à fortiori, the more so, how much more</i> (following an affirmative clause), <i>how much less</i> (following a negative clause), <i>furthermore, in fact</i> .			
kûwn (כּוּן) [pronounced koon]	<i>to be firmly established, to be set up, to be established, to be prepared, to be ready; to confirm, to set up, to maintain, to found [a city]</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #3559 BDB #465
têbêl (תֵּבֵל) [pronounced tay ^b -VAYL]	<i>the fertile and inhabited earth, the habitable globe, world</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8398 BDB #385

This word is often used in poetry in connection to the creation of the entire earth.

As discussed **above**, there are ancient manuscripts which instead read: **Say among the nations, the Lord rules by the wood** [i.e., *the cross*]...

Translation: ...furthermore, the [entire] earth is firmly established [by Him]—... God set up the earth; He established it. He set up the interaction and interdependence of species; He set up a balance of nature. God set up a perfect balance of water, ice and water vapor; and designed us to be wholly dependent upon water, which is the rarest form of H₂O in the universe. God designed the earth so that the vast oceans, filled with undrinkable water, would enter into the water cycle and become water vapor, which would in turn water the land and provide us with our much needed water. Then this water would in turn run into the seas, and begin the cycle again.

God set up the physical laws of this earth, like gravity, magnetism, aerodynamics, along with a hundred others which do not occur to me at this time; He set up the laws of chemical reactions, laws which determine what happens when chemical compounds are dissolved in water, and a world designed from 3 basic elements: electrons, neutrons and protons (which, they themselves seem to be made up of even more basic building blocks). All of this is firmly established by Him, so that when we repeat a chemical experiment, with the same set of conditions, we get the exact same result, again and again and again. God firmly established this earth along with the species of animals and types of plants and inanimate matter; with a whole host of scientific laws and physical, chemical and biological relationships, that man, even after 6 millennia or so on this earth, has not yet fully uncovered. Not only did God designed the interaction of these things to be perfect before our world fell into sin, but He designed these things to work and interact even after sin has come into the world.

If the alternate reading—*Say among the nations, the Lord rules by the wood* [i.e., *the cross*]
—is the accurate reading, this indeed would be a fascinating discussion. Where this alternate reading is found and not found is discussed **above** among the ancient translations.

Psalm 96:10c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bal (בַּל) [pronounced bah]	<i>nothing, not, not yet, scarcely; lest [when followed by a future]; so that...not</i>	adverb	Strong's #1077 BDB #115
môwt (מוֹת) [pronounced moh]	<i>to be shaken, to totter, to be moved, to dislodge, to throw into disorder or disarray</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #4131 BDB #556

Translation: ...it is not tottering [or, it will not be dislodged; it will not be thrown into disarray]—... This verb refers back to the earth, and it is an interesting verb. It tells us that the earth will not be shaken, it will not totter, it will not be moved, it will not be dislodged; and it will not be thrown into disorder or disarray. It is a very odd thing to say about the earth. Apart from an earthquake, which affects a relatively small portion of land, how would we even think about the earth being shaken? How would it even occur to the psalmist that the earth could totter or be dislodged? How would such a thing even make sense to the psalmist of 1000 B.C.? Today, we understand that the earth is in an elliptical orbit about the sun, moving at an incredible speed, spinning on an axis at an incredible speed. For any of these things to be suddenly changed by as little as 10% would cause our world to be shaken; it would become dislodged and thrown into disorder or disarray. It would be like being in a car going 200 mph and suddenly slamming into a wall (actually, it would be much worse).

Where the earth is, the sort of orbit it is on, the tilting on its axis, the speed of its orbit, and even its very thickness and what it is made of, all has a tremendous impact on the fact that we are able to, with human ingenuity, walk on almost any part of this earth—and even before the great explosion in science, men have been able to occupy widely diverse parts of the earth. This is by divine design—it didn't just happen by accident—and God maintains, by His laws, our orbit and all things to do with the orbit of the earth; to which the psalmist herein alludes.

To me, it is fascinating that the psalmist of 3000 years ago would use the language which we find here. Most of us, when we think of the earth in its orbit around the sun, can imagine the concept of the earth becoming dislodged

from this orbit. In fact, there have even been movies about this: an asteroid about to hit the earth, which would, of course, dislodge our planet from its orbit and wipe out all of humanity within a few minutes. We can visualize such things, because we have a visual in our heads of our planet orbiting the sun. This psalmist, somehow, writing 3000 years ago, manages to choose words which paint a similar picture for us, but without necessarily understanding anything about astronomy.

Now, quite frankly, I don't believe that this is the entire thrust of the first part of v. 10, but that God's laws for the stability of the earth indicate that there is more here on earth than just a temporary way station. There are a lot of things which we Christians miss when attempting to see things from the divine perspective. We tend to see our bodies as temporary and our time on earth as just a drop in the bucket with respect to eternity. In some respects this is true, but we should not be so quick to set aside our bodies or to set aside the earth. It appears as though we will have interim resurrection bodies, and, at the 2nd advent, receive full-fledged resurrection bodies. So, even though our bodies are corrupted by sin, we should in no way think that God is just going to dump our bodies and we will be spirits roaming about the universe, yet somehow holding harps and singing while sitting in clouds. There does not appear to be a time when we are completely without a body of some sort, and the replacement of our corrupt bodies seems to be more of a function of getting a better body, and one which lacks the sin nature. There does not appear to be a time, however, where we are without a body. Secondly, we live in a fallen world; however, this does not mean that God is going to completely dispense with the earth. After the tribulation, we will continue to live on this earth for another millennium. We find that He will create a new heavens and a new earth in the end, which is going to be a part of eternity. My point is, what is physical—our bodies and that which is all around us—does not appear as though it is going to suddenly disappear.

There is a false religious philosophy, I think born out of Platonic thought, that the body is evil and when our spirits are freed from our bodies, then we will truly be free and sinless. The Bible does not present such a scenario, even though some Christian religions seem as though they take a few pages from Plato. God will cleanse us of our sin natures; God will cleanse the world of evil and sin; but God is not going to completely disregard these things in the physical realm because they are in themselves evil, because they are, in fact, not. Almost every cell in our body is tainted by the sin nature, and carries within it programming for eventual debilitation and death. As some of you know, our cells die off and new cells are grown; and every 7 years, we are a completely new physical person. That in and of itself, would suggest that our bodies were designed for immortality, but are now corrupted by sin, and programmed to dissipate, despite the cell renewal process.

I happen to be a baby boomer and myself and millions of others are either beginning retirement or will be there within the next 10 or 20 years, all with bodies which are giving out—a natural process, yet unpleasant. At this point in time, medical and medicare are nearly bankrupting the federal budget. Can you imagine what will happen over the next 40 or 50 years? There are a lot of godless baby boomers, and when death looms large, they will fight it tooth and nail. We are going to see our medical system and our legal system bogged down with baby boomers trying to hang on for an extra month or an extra year or an extra few years, draining the resources of our country, which is already taxed close to the limits.

One of the things on the table in this upcoming election is federal medical plans, and we have a huge number of young people who are going to vote for these plans (well, for those who support these plans), not realizing that they will be taxed 10 or 20 years from now like there is no tomorrow. They think they are voting for hope and for the future and for getting the rich to pay their fair share, but they are in for a rude awakening when this legislation suddenly hits them hard in the pocketbook.

It is all because we have these bodies which are giving out, these bodies which—despite cell regeneration—will die, and many of us in this generation will hang onto life with everything that we have. It is going to be a fascinating and entertaining thing to watch.

Although this is a fascinating tangent (at least to me), let's go back to the our first tangent, and then return to the subject matter of this verse. After death, we will continue to have a body of some sort (**a body just like His**) and there will always be heaven and earth. So, this psalm speaks not just of the earth as it is today, being kept steady

and being firmly guided by a dozen or more physical laws; but that the concept of the earth is going to be an eternal concept. It will always be, even though God will remake it at some point in time.

Psalm 96:10d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dīyn (דין) [pronounced <i>deen</i>]	<i>to judge, to correctly evaluate, to evaluate, to condemn, to vindicate; to defend [the right of anyone]; to rule, to regulate; to contend with</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1777 BDB #192
ʿammîym (עַמִּים) [pronounced <i>gahm-MEEM</i>]	<i>peoples, nations; tribes [of Israel]; relatives of anyone</i>	masculine plural collective noun	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
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
mêyshârîym (מִישָׁרִים) [pronounced <i>may-shaw-REEM</i>]	<i>evenness, uprightness, equity; equities, just acts, righteous decisions</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #4339 BDB #449
This noun is never found in the singular in Scripture.			

Translation: *...He judges [all] the peoples with righteous decisions.* Just as God has set up a series of physical laws, which must be obeyed, He has also set up a series of moral laws to which we are subject, and any group of people who stray from these moral laws will suffer.

The United States is a good example of this. I write this in an election year (2008) where dishonesty and hatred have been rampant for the past 7 years. In all the times I have lived, I have never known one side of the political spectrum to become so angry, so hateful, and to permeate the culture with so many vicious slogans and lies, primarily against one man (President George W. Bush). These things are morally wrong, and we, as a nation, will pay for it. Whether we will elect candidates who have no business going from zero to the most powerful position on earth or whether we will elect a candidate who will be actively opposed by half of the nation for the next 4 or 8 years, we don't know; but the end results will not be pretty (however, they will be fascinating). If the political party which has touted dishonesty, immorality, hatred, and class envy takes control, there will be a price to pay by all of us. God judges individuals and God judges us corporately (i.e., as a nation in the illustration which I am giving).

There are moral laws which are a part of society which are just as important to us as physical laws. Widespread immorality, lying and cheating will corrupt and eventually doom a society. There is the ideal family unit of a father, a mother and children. Satan will attack this basic unit: single parent homes, domestic violence, widespread divorce and out of wedlock children, the idea that the government knows best when it comes to raising a child, children being raised by homosexual couples.

We are designed to have our freedom preserved by a national entity, so there will be attacks against our national sovereignty: the idea of the UN making the final decisions, the concepts of internationalism over nationalism, the idea that we need a consensus of opinions when it comes to doing this or that out in the world—anything which will subordinate national authority and national interests to some sort of an international community or consensus is human viewpoint and Satanic doctrine. The attack against our national entity by at least one political party today

is, to have it do much more than protect us from wars outside the nation—e.g., to protect us from bad financial decisions or to give us a public health system—this also attacks the nation as well.

The most basic divine institution, human volition, is also attacked. We have cities which oppose military recruitment offices and ROTC on campus, seeking to remove the military option from believers and patriots in this land. They believe that, if they undermine the military, that somehow, this will result in no more wars (or no more US involvement in war). They seek a public school system which opposes alternative education; which attempts to brainwash the children as much as possible. In fact, this year, 2007, we have candidates asking for education to begin at even an earlier age, citing the failure of our schools as being the reason why more public education is needed. Into our public school system is thrown all kinds of propaganda, e.g., sex education, as the government is seen as better able to deal with this than the family (and when statistics do not bear this out, then even more sex education is called for).

We have ridiculous warning labels placed on various products and stringent federal controls, to protect the public. However, in viewing the Darwin awards, it seems only right that some children and adults kill themselves with product misuse (I am only half-kidding). The idea behind these labels is, we are too stupid to realize that touching a hot electrical wire is a bad idea, and that we ought to be able to sue whoever has money if we are stupid enough to do such a thing. When you are unable to take responsibility for the things which you choose to do, that in and of itself, robs you of the responsibility for the use of your volition. A person working for McDonald's should not be able to sue McDonald's because someone called them on the phone, pretended to be a policeman, and asked them to strip search another employee. The employee who allows herself to be strip searched by a manager based upon a telephone call should not have any sort of civil recourse either. These are volitional decisions. This tells them, it does not matter how stupid your choices are in life, if you think of something stupid enough to do, then we will see to it that our court system awards you money for your stupidity. It is absolutely wrong to sue someone else because of a freewill choice that you make. This sort of thing undermines you of personal responsibility, which undermines the importance of your decisions.

When God judges a people—this can refer to the final judgment—but this can also be a judgment which He makes in time. You will recall Moses leading the Israelites through the desert, and how they would come up to this or that difficulty and not just become flummoxed, but actually provoke God to anger over their negative volition and hard-headedness. God even offered to wipe all of them out and begin anew with Moses. Moses, the spiritual Atlas of his generation, reasoned with God, and interceded on their behalf (as a Christ figure) to prevent their being wiped out.

There are people today, people whom we might even turn our noses up to in church, who pray for our nation day after day, night after night, and, just like Moses, convince God to preserve our nation.⁴⁶ God sees the choices that we make. He sees the immorality, the mental attitude sins, the verbal sins, the rape and murder; and He makes a judgment call. God has allowed our nation to not only survive, but to thrive, but there have been periods of discipline based upon His evaluation of our nation (His judgments). I've given a list of things already which God looks at when evaluating our nation as a corporate witness for Him. God does things, involves Himself in some ways, and God gives us the power and strength to do this as well, to stem the tide of human viewpoint, which would destroy this nation. However, of the greatest importance is the function of believers in this nation; do we actually have an interest in His Word; do we pursue spiritual growth; do we understand the spiritual issues set before us? There are a lot of things at play, but God judges all the people with His righteous decisions.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

I mentioned earlier that there seem to be portions at the beginning of this psalm which match up to the middle of this psalm. Let's see if I can make these parallels work:

⁴⁶ I am looking at this from the human viewpoint; obviously, God knew in eternity past just how long He would allow our nation to survive, and these prayers are testimonies to Him and these prayers glorify Him, and God, based upon our volitional choices, has allowed our nation to survive to this day.

Parallels in Psalm 96	
Part I: Psalm 96:1–6	Part II: Psalm 96:7–10
Sing a new song to Y ^e howah; O sing to Y ^e howah, all the earth. Sing to Y ^e howah, praise [or, <i>celebrate</i>] His name;	Grant to Y ^e howah the families of [various] nations; ascribe [or, <i>grant</i>] to Y ^e howah glory and strength [or, <i>majesty</i>]. Ascribe to Y ^e howah the honor of His name;
3 imperatives, all the same, followed by <i>His name</i> .	
every day, announce [the good news] of His deliverance [or, <i>proclaim His Jesus</i>].	bring a tribute offering [to Him] and enter into His villages.
Jesus in part I is associated with bringing a tribute offering. Our faith is our tribute offering.	
Declare His glory among the Gentiles; [declare] His extraordinary acts among the peoples.	Prostrate yourselves toward Y ^e howah in the beauty of holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth.
All the Gentiles are to declare His glory; all the earth is to tremble before Him. The universality of Jehovah Elohim is made clear in both parts I and II.	
For Y ^e howah [is] great [and immutable] and [He is] greatly praised [or, <i>celebrated</i>]; He [is] feared [and respected] above all gods.	Say among the peoples, “Y ^e howah reigns [over all];
God is to be feared above all gods as He reigns over all.	
For all the gods of the people [are but] empty idols; and Y ^e howah made the [two] heavens. Majesty and Splendor [are] before Him [or, <i>in His sight</i>]; strength [and refuge] and glory [and beauty] [are] in His sanctuary.	furthermore, the [entire] earth is firmly established [by Him]— it is not tottering [or, <i>it will not be dislodged; it will not be thrown into disarray</i>]— He judges [all] the peoples with righteous decisions.”
God both made the two heavens and establishes the earth. This qualified Him to rule over all.	
You may notice that you can just as easily read this psalm from left to right, essentially shuffling parts I and II together.	

God’s judgment is not a bad thing. Have you ever been drawn into a movie, and the villains of the movie really angered you, and when you saw them get the comeuppance, you cheered or clapped? It is an innate part of our nature to desire to see evil men get their just rewards. This is how we think; this is how we roll. Therefore, divine judgment should be closely associated with rejoicing.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Let Heaven and Earth Rejoice—God will Judge All Things when He Comes

Rejoice the [two] heavens and goes in a circle, the earth;
thunders the sea and his fullness.

Psalm 96:11

The heavens rejoice and the earth goes in a circle [in joy];
the sea and its fulness roar [like thunder].

**The heavens rejoice while the earth orbits the sun in joy;
the sea and all that is in it roars like thunder.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	Rejoice the [two] heavens and goes in a circle, the earth; thunders the sea and his fullness.
Septuagint	Let the heavens rejoice, and the earth exult [or, <i>be glad</i>]; let the sea <u>be agitated</u> , and the fullness of it.

Significant differences: Although the second verb appears to be different, it can mean *to be glad, to rejoice*; so the Greek translation is reasonable. The third verb does appear to be different in the Greek and Hebrew. In the Hebrew, it refers to great noise being made by the sea; in the Greek, it has to be with being moved, agitated or shaken. The Latin agrees with the Greek and the Syriac agrees with the Hebrew.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Tell the heavens and the earth to be glad and celebrate! Command the ocean to roar with all of its creatures...
Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i>	Be glad, earth and sky! Roar, sea, and every creature in you;... Let's hear it from Sky, With Earth joining in, And a huge round of applause from Sea.
New Century Version	Let the skies rejoice and the earth be glad; let the sea and everything in it shout.
New Living Translation	Let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice! Let the sea and everything in it shout his praise!.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Let the heavens have joy and the earth be glad; let the sea be thundering with all its waters;...
Easy English (Churchyard)	Earth and sky, be happy! Sea and everything in it, *roar (because you are happy!)
<i>God's Word</i> ™	Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad. Let the sea and everything in it roar like thunder.
HCSB	Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and all that fills it resound.
JPS (Tanakh)	Let the heavens rejoice and the earth exult; let the sea and all within it thunder,...
NET Bible®	Let the sky rejoice, and the earth be happy! Let the sea and everything in it shout!
NIRV	Let the heavens be full of joy. Let the earth be glad. Let the ocean and everything in it roar.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

NASB	Let the heavens be glad, and let the (V)earth rejoice; Let the sea roar, and all it contains;
WEB <i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice. Let the sea roar, and it's fullness! The heavens joy, and the earth is joyful, The sea and its fulness roar.

What is the gist of this verse? Since God will judge the people, the result is, the heavens and earth rejoice, and all things in them.

Psalm 96:11a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
sâmach (שָׂמַח) [pronounced saw-MAHKH]	to rejoice, to be glad, to be joyful, to be merry	3 rd person masculine plural Qal imperfect	Strong's #8055 BDB #970
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced shaw-MAH-yim]	heavens, skies	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gîyl (לִיג) [pronounced gee]	to go in a circle; the leap for joy, to rejoice	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect; apocopated form	Strong's #1523 BDB #162
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Hidden within this phrase is the name of God. Recall back in v. 2, we find our Lord's name hidden; here, in this phrase, we find the Tetragrammaton YHWH, each letter beginning each set of words. If you look back over this, you won't see it. However, in the Hebrew mind, the definite article is affixed to the noun as a part of a noun (not as a separate word, as in the Greek or English) and a wâw conjunction is also seen more as a part of a word, rather than as a separate word in and of itself. So, the Hebrew reads:

וְהוּא יְרֵאָה וְהוּא יְרֵאָה The first letter of each word is הוהי, which is YHWH.

The author, in a sense, as guided by God the Holy Spirit, is telling us that there are things hidden within this psalm. As I have pointed out, we have Jesus named in the 2nd verse, and, in this verse, we will have the earth in its orbit.

Translation: [The heavens rejoice and the earth goes in a circle \[in joy\];...](#) Quite obviously, heavens do not rejoice, per se, but the idea is, all of God's creation is glad for order and law. We do not live in a random universe where just anything can happen. Essentially, all that God has made, including the angels, celebrate the order which is the universe. In context, what is being celebrated is, [God judges the peoples](#). As I explained at the beginning of this verse—deep within us, we have a desire to see justice done. We want to see good rewarded and evil punished. When we see this, we rejoice. So, when God judges the earth, the heavens and earth, and all that is in them rejoice.

Barnes writes: *Let all worlds be full of joy, as they are all interested in the fact here stated. The universe is one. It has been made by the same hand; it is under the control of the same mind; it is governed by the same laws. The God who reigns on earth reigns in heaven; and what affects one part of the universe affects all. Hence, in all the manifestation of the character of God, whether made in heaven or in the earth, it is proper to call on all the universe to partake in the general joy.*⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:11.

The second phrase is fascinating. As already mentioned, the first thing which I thought about in the previous verse is the earth's orbit—when the verse spoke of the earth not being dislodged or tottering, I immediately visualized this from the standpoint of its orbit. Here, God the Holy Spirit, who was there at the creation of the earth, has fun with this. He uses language which invokes the orbit of the earth, and then tells us the earth is going in a circle. Now, that is the literal meaning of the verb, and the idea is, one is rejoicing and dancing in a circle from being happy, and the earth is being pictured this way. However, it does make me smile to read these words, specifically chosen by God the Holy Spirit, found right here, in this context, in a place where images of the earth's orbit have already been evoked. A person reading this in 1000 B.C. would think nothing of this; they would simply see the earth dancing in a circle in joy; but to us, knowing that the earth is orbiting the sun, so as not to be dislodged or tottering, this is a remarkable verb for the Holy Spirit to have chosen.

As mentioned in the Hebrew exegesis, hidden in these first few words is the name of God (if you skip over the Hebrew exegesis, I suggest that you go back and read this one). Of course this could be simply a coincidence, but I don't think that the Bible is just filled with coincidences. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Scripture to write the words of God, but without sacrificing their personalities, vocabularies and past experiences. However, this does not prevent God the Holy Spirit from hiding some things within the Bible, which we discover thousands of years later—e.g., the phrase we have here.

Now, do not go overboard on this. A few years ago, there was this book which was called *The Bible Code* (or something like that), and it claimed that, if you took every hundredth letter or something like that, you would spell out events from our era (e.g., the Kennedy assassinations). This is stupid. Even though the assassination of John F. Kennedy deeply impacted those of my generation, it is a pretty minor event in all of history. Furthermore, even though we can be quite certain as to the Bible and its text, we cannot be certain down to the very last letter. In some manuscripts, for instance, we might find the same name, but spelled differently. This would add a few letters to the mix, and throw the Bible code out of kilter. This does not occur just once and awhile; this occurs virtually throughout the entire Bible in every chapter. I can go through the first chapter of Genesis, and be quite certain of the text and the interpretation of the text, but, what I cannot do, is be absolutely certain of each and every letter and each and every word. If you have examined any chapter of the Bible, you know that there are alternate readings, and these alternate readings may not affect the meaning, but they would definitely impact the Bible code. My point is, God the Holy Spirit has cleverly hidden things in the text of Scripture, so that every generation can find things which were not known to previous generations, but which do not contradict the essentials of the faith.

As I have gone through the Bible, word by word, I have discovered fascinating things which, although they do not contradict the fundamentals of our faith, have not been taught before either. The Bible is rich and it is deep and I believe that it can be plumbed to greater and greater depths as long as mankind is on this earth. There are some very difficult passages, and I believe that God will reveal their meanings, and those of us who have studied these passages without fully understanding them, will slap our own individual foreheads, and exclaim, "Duh, that's what is meant; why didn't I see that?"

Psalm 96:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ'am (רָעַם) [pronounced raw-GAHM]	<i>to thunder, to roar from heaven; to rage, to roar [as the sea; as thunder]; to provoke to anger, to cause to be angered</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7481 BDB #947
The Greek verb emphasizes the movement of the sea: <i>to agitate, to move, to totter, to shake; to overthrow</i> . The Latin uses a similar verb; the Syriac is in agreement with the Hebrew.			
yâm (יַם) [pronounced yawm]	<i>sea, lake, river, seaward, west, westward</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3220 BDB #410

Psalm 96:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
m ^e lô' (מלוא) [pronounced m ^e low]	fulness, that which fills, that which is full; multitude, crowd [i.e., those which fill a city]	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4393 BDB #571

Translation: ...the sea and its fulness roar [like thunder]. Now I do not exactly follow the verb here and why it was chosen. We have the seas roaring (a verb which also can be used metaphorically for anger). Perhaps the idea here is, the earth remains unshaken, even though it is pounded day and night by the sea. However, the context—both this and the next verse—require that this *roaring* be some form of rejoicing, and perhaps what is being evoked here is the sound of a crowd roaring and cheering. We cannot bend and shape the words that we find in Scripture, but we must also be open to reasonable understandings of these words. With the heavens rejoicing and the earth so happy, it is running around in circles, and the open fields below rejoicing, contextually, the noise made by the seas must also be favorable, as a crowd roaring and cheering. We find very similar phrasing in Psalm 98:7–9.

In poetry, it is normal to find human characteristic applied things which are not human. Here, the sea and all of its fullness is called upon the roar as a crowd might roar and cheer. We find very similar phrasing in Psalm 69:34 148:1–4, 7–9 Isa. 44:23 49:13 Rev. 12:12. It is like calling upon all creation to praise Him. This general approach will be found in the following verse as well.



The first 3 words of v. 13 appear to belong to v. 12, so I have included them with v. 12. Because this would have been such a mess to determine what do I do with the other translations, I just put vv. 12–13 together.

**Exults a field and all which [is] in him;
then shouts for joy all trees of a wood to
faces of Y^ehowah,
for He has come.
For He has come to judge the earth.
He judges a world in rightness
and peoples in His faithfulness.**

Psalm
96:12–13

**The open field and all that is in it rejoice;
then the trees of the forest celebrate [with a
loud voice] before Y^ehowah, for He has come;
for He has come to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness
and the people with His faithfulness [and
firmness].**

**The open field and all that is in it rejoices
while the trees of the forest celebrate loudly before Jehovah, Who has arrived.
He has come to judge all the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness
and He will judge the people with firmness and faithfulness to His truth.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

Exults a field and all which [is] in him;
then shouts for joy all trees of a wood to faces of Y^ehowah, for He has come.
For He has come to judge the earth.

Septuagint	He judges a world in rightness and peoples in His faithfulness. The plains shall rejoice, and all things in them: then will all the trees of the wood exult before the presence of the Lord, for He is coming; for He comes to judge the earth; He will judge the world in righteousness, and the people with His truth.
Significant differences:	Brenton reasonably places the first few words of v. 13 at the end of v. 12, where they belong. The LXX text conforms to the Masoretic text. There are no significant differences.

Anytime I do something like include a portion of one verse with another, this introduces the problem of, where should I place these verses in the various translations. I have decided to simply combine vv. 12 and 13. In this way, I do not have to decide what portions I should place with one verse or the other.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	...and the fields to rejoice with all of their crops. Then every tree in the forest will sing joyful songs to the LORD. He is coming to judge all people on earth with fairness and truth.
Good News Bible (TEV)	...be glad, fields, and everything in you! The trees in the woods will shout for joy when the LORD comes to rule the earth. He will rule the peoples of the world with justice and fairness.
<i>The Message</i>	Let Wilderness turn cartwheels, Animals, come dance, Put every tree of the forest in the choir—... An extravaganza before GOD as he comes, As he comes to set everything right on earth, Set everything right, treat everyone fair. The CEV, GNB and the Message are by far the least literal of the translations. Therefore, it is very difficult to match these word for word or even phrase for phrase with the original language.
New Jerusalem Bible	Let the countryside exult, and all that is in it, and all the trees of the forest cry out for joy, at Yahweh's approach, for he is coming, coming to judge the earth; he will judge the world with saving justice, and the nations with constancy.
New Living Translation	Let the fields and their crops burst out with joy! Let the trees of the forest rustle with praise before the Lord, for he is coming! He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with justice, and the nations with his truth. Of the paraphrased versions of the Bible, I like the NLT the most. Here is one good reason: it agrees with me on the division of the sentences of this and the previous verse. ☺.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Let the field be glad, and everything which is in it; yes, let all the trees of the wood be sounding with joy, Before the Lord, for he is come; he is come to be the judge of the earth; the earth will be judged in righteousness, and the peoples with unchanging faith.
Complete Apostles' Bible	The plains shall rejoice, and all things in them; then shall all the trees of the wood exalt before the presence of the Lord; for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth; He shall judge the world in righteousness, and the people with His truth.
Easy English (Churchyard)	Fields, you be happy as well, and everything in you!

Then, all the trees in the forests will sing because they are so happy!
 (They will sing) to the *LORD when he comes.
 He will come to be a *judge of the earth.
 He will be a good *judge and he will be fair to the people
 Let the fields and everything in them rejoice.
 Then all the trees in the forest will sing joyfully in the LORD'S presence because he is coming.
 He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and its people with his truth.

God's Word™

JPS (Tanakh)

...the fields and everything in them exult;
 then shall all the trees of the forest shout for joy
 at the presence of the LORD, for He is coming,
 for He is coming to rule the earth;
 He will rule the world justly,
 and its peoples in faithfulness.

New International Version

...let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them.
 Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy;
 they will sing before the LORD, for he comes,
 he comes to judge the earth.
 He will judge the world in righteousness
 and the peoples in his truth.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

A Voice in the Wilderness

...let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the forests shall rejoice before Jehovah. The final two words added by this translation come from the next verse.
 For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth.

WEB

Let the field and all that is in it exult! Then all the trees of the woods shall sing for joy Before Yahweh; for he comes, For he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, The peoples with his truth. For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth.

Young's Updated LT

The field is joyful, and all that is in it, Then all trees of the forest sing, before Jehovah, for He has come. For He has come to judge the earth. He judges the world in righteousness, And the peoples in His faithfulness!

What is the gist of this verse? All the earth rejoices when God judges the earth and the people in it with His righteousness.

Psalm 96:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿâlaz (עָלַז) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAHZ</i>]	<i>to exult, to rejoice; to triumph</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5937 BDB #759
sâdeh (שָׂדֶה) [pronounced <i>saw-DEH</i>]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Psalm 96:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [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 with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

Translation: [The open field and all that is in it rejoice;...](#) The theme of the end of this psalm is, all that God has made rejoices and sings aloud to Him, and that this is closely associated with His judgment of the world.

I also want you to remember the reason for this psalm: David is bringing the Ark into Jerusalem, and he has deposited it in the tent which he made (or had made) for it. This is a great time, a great spiritual moment, and what better way to celebrate this, than to have all of creation celebrate this event. So, we have word after word for *rejoice*, affixed to a variety of nouns.

Psalm 96:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾâz (אָז) [pronounced awz]	<i>then, at that time, in that case (when following an if or though), now, as things are; that being so</i>	adverb	Strong's #227 BDB #23
rânan (רָנַן) [pronounced raw-NAHN]	<i>to shout for joy, to celebrate with shouting; to celebrate in a loud voice</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Piel imperfect	Strong's #7442 BDB #943
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	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
ʿêtsîym (עֵצִים) [pronounced gay-TSEEM]	<i>trees; trees felled for building (1Kings 5:20, 32), lumber (Gen. 6:14 2Kings 12:13), sticks or logs for fuel (Gen. 22:3 Lev. 1:7)</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #6086 BDB #781
yāʿar (יָעַר) [pronounced YAH-ġahr]	<i>wood, forest, thicket; a beehive; an excess of honey; a thicket of trees</i>	masculine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #3293 and #3264 (plural form) BDB #420

Translation: [...then the trees of the forest celebrate \[with a loud voice\]...](#) This verse at first confused me, as trees do not tend to make a lot of noise, unless they are falling (and then, of course, someone has to be there to hear it). Trees are also filled with a variety of creatures. One of my favorite moments is when there are large groups of bird migrating through my area, and they will stop in a huge group, resting on the trees in my yard and in the

yards of my neighbors. The noise of their chattering is overwhelming, drowning out the other sounds of the neighborhood. It is a joyful sound, and when I hear it when I am inside, I often enjoy going outside to soak it in. So, I believe this is the imagery here—trees filled with an abundance of loudly chattering birds and other animals.

It is worth noting that all the world is under sin. Not only are the cells of our body corrupted by sin, but all of nature appears to be so corrupted as well. Animals grow old and die as we do; plants and even trees, grow old and die. There is a natural predilection for all things to grow old, die and then to rot, reverting back into the earth. Paul writes: **For the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation was not willingly subjected to emptiness, but because of Him who subjected it on hope that the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now** (Rom. 8:19–22). When God has removed sin from the earth, there will apparently be a change in nature as well. The ferocity of animals will abate, although I do not know whether there will continue to be some sort of life cycle for plants. But there will be great changes in the earth, and all of the earth will celebrate these changes, which come about as a result of God’s ultimate judgment of sin and the production of the sin nature (i.e., human good).⁴⁸

Such verbiage is common in the Bible: Psalm 65:12–13 Isa. 42:10–11 55:12–13.

Psalm 96:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong’s #6440 BDB #815
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]. L ^o pânîym (לְפָנַיִם) can take on a temporal sense as well: <i>before, of old, formerly, in the past, in past times</i> .			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ohowah</i>	proper noun	Strong’s #3068 BDB #217

Translation: *...before Y^ohowah,...* This phrase seems to fit well with v. 12, so I am placing it here instead of with v. 13. All of this celebratory noise is to take place before God. This would give us: *The open field and all that is in it rejoice; then the trees of the forest celebrate [with a loud voice] before Y^ohowah,...* If you notice, some of the English translations treat this phrase in the same way, affixing to v. 12 rather than to v. 13.

Psalm 96:13b			
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

⁴⁸ I believe that this is a far better interpretation than some which I have read; e.g, saying that the trees stand for human governors, etc.

Psalm 96:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97

Translation: ...for He has come. We find this pair of words repeated. For this reason, I have placed their first occurrence with v. 12, and use these words to begin v. 13 (if I were numbering the verses myself). So, quite properly, this would be considered v. 12d (I number these in the Hebrew exegesis as they are found in the Hebrew, however). Therefore, v. 12 ought to read: *The open field and all that is in it rejoice; then the trees of the forest celebrate [with a loud voice] before Y^ehowah, for He has come.*

What we find here is quite dramatic: all of the created things of the earth are to rejoice and to celebrate Jehovah Elohim, *for He has come!* This is so apropos to bringing the Ark into Jerusalem, so apropos to our Lord coming into Jerusalem on the mule (donkey?); so apropos to our Lord returning to Jerusalem in the end times to judge all the world.

Psalm 96:13c

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
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97

The doubling of this phrase (*For He has come!*) indicates that our Lord would surely come to the earth. The doubling here may also indicate that there are two advents of our Lord.

lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַח) [pronounced shaw-FAHT]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
'erets (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 with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...for He has come to judge the earth. We have a repetition of *for He has come*. The text found in 1Chron. 16 does not repeat this phrase, and it ends with ...for He has come to judge the earth. The next two lines are not found in the Chronicles text, which does not call them into question at all, since the Chronicles text does not include every single line of the 4 psalms partially quoted therein.

Gill comments about the repetition of *He has come*: [*He has come*] is repeated to show the certainty of Christ's coming, and the importance of it, and the just reason there was for the above joy and

*gladness on account of it; and it may be also, as Jerom and others have observed, to point out both the first and second coming of Christ.*⁴⁹

The first *He has come* follows all of the celebration of the earth and of nations. This is the 1st Advent of our Lord, where He died for our sins, which will act will redeem mankind (those who believe in Him), eventually result in the restoration of the earth, and, because of which, all things shall rejoice. The second *He has come*, speaks of the 2nd Advent of our Lord, which coming will result in the Judgment Seat of Christ. The nations engaged in war in Israel will be judged and destroyed; and then all men whose names were not written in the Book of Life, will stand before Him and be condemned on the basis of their good works, and be cast forever into the Lake of Fire.

The perfect tense is used each time to indicate a specific period of time in history, which certainty is expressed with the perfect tense, even though these events are future from the time of writing.

Gill writes: *[He will come] to judge the earth; the inhabitants of it, small and great, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, alive and dead, righteous and wicked; when all works, words, and thoughts, good and bad, will be brought to account; and every man will be judged, as those shall be, with or without the grace of God.*⁵⁰

As Bob Thieme has taught a myriad of times, Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world—He paid the penalty for the sins of all mankind. Therefore, no one is cast into the Lake of Fire based upon their sins. One illustration would be, if you owed a fine, and someone else paid it for you, you would have no reason to continue to go to the courthouse and offer to pay this fine. That would be silly. God will not cast anyone into the Lake of Fire based upon the sins which they have committed, as these sins have been paid for. However, our sin nature also produces human good. I have a relative that, throughout most of our lives, I learned from an early age, that if he said we ought to do one thing, then it would have been right to do the opposite. However, during his life, he has, on occasion, *done the right thing*. His sin nature has chosen to do good things (not very often, but on occasion). This will be the basis of his indictment. My human good will be burned, yet I will be delivered, so as through fire (1Cor. 3:9–15); and those who choose not to believe in Jesus Christ will be cast into the Lake of Fire based upon the good works produced by their sin natures (Rev. 20:11–15).

As discussed earlier, one theory is, the verbiage of this psalm was used when rebuilding the Temple after the dispersion. The text found in Chronicles was the version used by David and Asaph when the moving of the Ark into Jerusalem was celebrated. Another approach is, the version found here in the psalms was what David wrote; and the version found in Chronicles was the same psalm, slightly adjusted by Asaph for the ceremony of the Ark. What did not occur is, some person with a theological bend came across this psalm, either in Chronicles or in the Psalms, and then changed it in order to reflect a particular set of doctrines. Even though there are some differences between the text, none of the differences reflect some great doctrinal swing toward this or that theology. A fourth option, which is more probable than the third is, these simply reflect textual errors made by copyists over the period of 2000 years or so. However, we have texts which are separated in time by a thousand years or so, and these texts do not seem to have these sets of differences (whole lines and verses eliminated). Now, interestingly enough, on the other hand, we do find a few sections of the New Testament where verses were apparently added to the text (e.g., the end of Mark).

Now, to the meaning of this and the final phrases: all of this celebration has a double application. They are applying all of this celebratory language to bringing the Ark into Jerusalem and placing it in the tent. This is also the image of our Lord coming into Jerusalem for the week of Passover. Although the ultimate judgment was our sins poured out upon Him, throughout His ministry, our Lord made clear what is right and wrong.

Also, in this psalm, the psalmist speaks of all of this celebration to go along with the 2nd advent of Jesus Christ, when He will return to the earth to judge all the peoples and nations. This will mean that God's perfect justice and

⁴⁹ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:13.

⁵⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:6.

righteousness will be applied to all the earth. If you have ever desired that someone get their comeuppance, this is the time it comes to pass. **All that is crooked is made straight.**

Now, the Jews did not see a clear separation between the advents of our Lord. When our Lord's advents were spoken of, it was as though one advent. We find this in the **Doctrine of Intercalation**, which is about the Church Age being intercalated (inserted) into the Age of Israel. So we have the 1st Advent of our Lord followed by the 2nd Advent of our Lord in the Age of Israel. Inserted between these advents is the Church Age, which dispensation is unknown to those in the Age of Israel; and whose mystery doctrines are unknown to those in the Age of Israel. There are at least 9 Old Testament passages where we pass from the 1st to the 2nd Advent without any indication that there is some intervening time. One example of this is Isa. 9:6–7: **For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.** Because of intercalation, we should not expect to find any clear delineation between the advents of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. In the various passages where the advents occur together, in retrospect, we can separate them; however, the Jews could not necessarily see this point of separation.

When our Lord came to this earth, in His 1st Advent, He verbally judged those whose hardness of heart was apparent (e.g., the scribes and the pharisees), but He did not carry this judgment out. That is, He did not cast these men into the Lake of Fire.

There are two tangents I can take from here: first, do you see how the intervening period of the Church Age, between the 1st and 2nd Advents of our Lord, parallels the judgment of Satan and the fallen angels? Our Lord came to this earth, and He could differentiate between those who were His and those who were not. He called the religious types of His era snakes and vipers, he told other religious types that they were blaspheming against the Holy Spirit, and He threw the moneychangers out of the Temple. However, even though they stood condemned by Him, He did not cast them into the Lake of Fire. That time is coming, but not yet. Similarly, there is time between God pronouncing judgment on Satan and the angels and the carrying out of this sentence. The intervening period of time is known to us as human history/the Angelic Conflict.

The second tangent is, note the problem with just going along with the verses that you like the best. The scribes and pharisees obviously had some knowledge of Scripture, as did the Jews of that era; but, they chose to see the Coming Messiah as the Conquering King of King and Lord of Lords. They did not recognize Him as the Suffering Servant. Every time the advents of our Lord are found together, these religious types focused only upon the final judgment, but they did not focus upon the first few words or sentences in these same passages. Likewise, these religious types viewed the Mosaic Law as a means of righteousness, rather than as a means of condemnation. When faith in Jehovah Elohim was given as the means of appropriating righteousness, they ignored those passages (e.g. Gen. 15:6).⁵¹ My point is, the Bible is not a 10 page pamphlet. If you concentrate upon a relatively small set of passages as the foundation of your theology, you are either leaving a great deal out, or worse, distorting the truth because of what you leave out.

Let me see if I can pull this psalm together. At the very beginning, we are called upon to sing and to celebrate Who and What God is; and this leads us to His glorious coming, which should also be celebrated. For any who question some of the fundamentals of this psalm, let me draw an analogy: since I have had more time than I have in the past, I have paid more attention to this presidential race (2008) and must admit to becoming discouraged when a man with a proven record dropped out of the race. To me, he would have been the best presidential candidate and I would have celebrated his ascendancy to the presidency. Christ, to come and rule the world, in perfect righteousness, with a perfect government, would be infinitely better than any human ruler. Therefore, all of creation ought to rejoice at His coming, at His 2nd Advent, as His judgments and rule will be perfect.

⁵¹ For more of these passages, examine Old Testament salvation in the **Doctrine of Salvation**.

We are all inherently sinful, so that we might feel some apprehension at His coming. Personally, I know that, in my present state, I ought to be one who is judged, because apart from Christ, I have no true righteousness. The weakness of my flesh is only too well known to me. In my present state, if the Lord came, I would not be first in line to meet Him, but hiding, like Adam and the woman hid. The more we understand about God and the more we understand about our own nature, the more it is clear that there can be no close interaction between us and God. It is only because we are *in Christ* that we are saved (we are in Christ by faith in Him), and it is only because we will be rid of our sin natures either at death or when we meet Christ in the air that we can look forward to contact with Him. We are by nature and by choice in rebellion to God. The holiest person you know of is, by nature and by choice, in rebellion against God. It is our natural state. Therefore, although we ought to celebrate His coming, it is not abnormal to have some apprehension as well. This apprehension may be reasonably called sin (**whatever is not of faith is sin**); and it is by our immersion in the Word that we gain confidence that we are accepted in the beloved. It is because we stand upon His merit and not our own, that we may look to His coming with great anticipation and confidence.

Psalm 96:13d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced shaw-FAHT]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047
têbêl (לְבַיִת) [pronounced tay ^b -VAYL]	<i>the fertile and inhabited earth, the habitable globe, world</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8398 BDB #385
This word is often used in poetry in connection to the creation of the entire earth.			
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
tsedeq (צְדָקָה) [pronounced TZEH-dehk]	<i>rightness, straightness; what is right and just; righteousness, rightness, vindication</i>	masculine singular substantive	Strong's #6664 BDB #841

Translation: [He will judge the world with righteousness...](#) God will judge His creation (specifically meaning, His creatures who can distinguish between right and wrong) at the 2nd advent, and the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Psalm 96:13e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿammîym (עַמִּים) [pronounced ʿahm-MEEM]	<i>peoples, nations; tribes [of Israel]; relatives of anyone</i>	masculine plural collective noun	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Psalm 96:13e

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
ʿēmûwnâh (הַנּוֹמָה) [pronounced eh-moo-NAWH]	<i>faithfulness, dependability; firmness, steadiness, steadfast; security</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #530 BDB #53

Although this is related to the feminine singular noun *truth* (Strong's #571 BDB #54), neither BDB nor Gesenius give the specific meaning *truth* to this noun (although many translations do).

Translation: ...and the people with His faithfulness [and firmness]. This is an interesting term. I would have expected that God would judge with righteousness, justice and/or truth. However, here, the verbiage is, **God will judge the earth in righteousness and He will judge the peoples in faithfulness and firmness.** Faithfulness indicates that God will judge as He has promised to do; firmness means, He will judge exactly according to His perfect standards. No one is going to get off for simply being a nice person. All men have the same choice: we must believe in Jesus Christ and stand upon His righteousness or we can choose to stand upon our own righteousness, which is never sufficient.

Barnes gives us a reasonable summary of v. 13: *He will manifest himself as a righteous judge. He will come to reign over the world, and there will be in his reign universal occasion for joy. The allusion would seem to be to some future time when God would come to reign among people; to dispense justice; to vindicate his people, and to establish truth. The "language" is such as would properly refer to the anticipated reign of the Messiah, as a reign of righteousness, and is such language as is frequently employed in the Old Testament to denote the character of his reign. There is no reason to doubt that this psalm may be "designed" to describe the reign of the Messiah, and that the psalmist in this language may have looked forward to that future kingdom of righteousness and peace.*⁵²

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Psalm 96 Addendum

At this point, I know that there are three things which are interrelated: David brings the Ark into Jerusalem, for the first time. He composed this psalm to be sung to celebrate the Ark being in Jerusalem. Jesus, during His 1st Advent, came into Jerusalem during the final week before His crucifixion. We should be able to find some very important parallels between these three things (the psalm, the Ark being moved into Jerusalem, and our Lord coming into Jerusalem for the Passover).

⁵² Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, Psalm 96:13.

Furthermore, bear in mind, God the Holy Spirit is the writer of Scripture, as per the proper definition of the inspiration of Scripture.⁵³ Therefore, we should expect that God the Holy Spirit can properly place this psalm in the right place at the right time.

Psalm 96 Parallels		
Moving the Ark	Jesus Coming into Jerusalem	Psalm 96
<p>And he said to them, You are the heads of the fathers of the Levites. Sanctify yourselves, you and your brothers, so that you may bring up the ark of Jehovah, the God of Israel to the place which I have prepared for it (1Chron. 15:12).</p>	<p>And when they drew near Jerusalem, and had come to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, Go into the village across from you. And immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, The Lord has need of them, and immediately He will send them (Matt. 21:1–3).</p>	<p>Give to Jehovah the glory due to His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts (Psalm 96:8).</p> <p>Preparation is done for entry, according to the direction of the Word of God.</p>
<p>And it happened, David and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah out of the house of Obed-edom with joy. And it happened as God helped the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, they offered seven bulls and seven rams. And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites who carried the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song with the singers. David also had on him an ephod of linen. And all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, sounding aloud with harps and lyres (1Chron. 15:25–29).</p>	<p>And a very great crowd spread their garments in the way. Others cut down branches from the trees and spread them in the way. And the crowds who went before, and those who followed, cried out, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! (Matt. 21:8–9)</p>	<p>Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness of it. Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it; then shall all the trees of the forest rejoice before Jehovah (Psalm 96:11–13a).</p> <p>There is great celebration when the Ark comes into Jerusalem; and when Jesus comes into Jerusalem.</p>

⁵³ Verbal Plenary Inspiration means that "God the Holy Spirit so supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture that, without waiving their intelligence, their individuality, their personal feelings, their literary style, or any other human factor of expression, His Complete and Coherent Message to mankind was recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture: the very words bearing the Authority of Divine Authorship." From someone's notes from Bible class as posted on <http://www.geocities.com/brainout1/VPI.htm>

Psalm 96 Parallels		
Moving the Ark	Jesus Coming into Jerusalem	Psalm 96
<p>And they told King David, saying, Jehovah has blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God. And David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness (2Sam. 6:12).</p>	<p>And the crowds who went before, and those who followed, cried out, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest! And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the crowd said, This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee (Matt. 21:9–11).</p>	<p>Give to Jehovah the glory due to His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts. O worship Jehovah in the beauty of holiness; fear before Him, all the earth. Say among the nations, Jehovah reigns; and the world shall be established; it shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples in uprightness (Psalm 96:8–10).</p> <p>Jehovah God is recognized as to Who and What He is. David better appreciated the Ark for what it was.</p>
<p>And they brought in the ark of Jehovah and set it in its place in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Jehovah (2Sam. 6:17).</p> <p>And they brought the ark of God and set it in the middle of the tent which David had pitched for it. And they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God. And David made an end of offering the burnt offering and the peace offerings (1Chron. 16:1–2).</p>	<p>And the content of the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so He opened not His mouth. In His humiliation His judgment was taken away, and who shall declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth." (Acts 8:38–39)</p> <p>Know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1Peter 1:18–19)</p>	<p>Give to Jehovah the glory due to His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts (Psalm 96:8).</p> <p>Sacrifices and offerings are given. Our Lord is the sacrificial offering on our behalf. However, these offerings would come to an end, as Jesus Christ is the true offering for our sins.</p>

Psalm 96 Parallels		
Moving the Ark	Jesus Coming into Jerusalem	Psalm 96
<p>And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Jehovah of Hosts. And he gave out among all the people, among all the multitude of Israel, to the women as well as men, to each one a cake of bread and one raisin-cake. And all the people departed, each one to his house (2Sam. 6:18–19).</p> <p>Then David blessed the people in the name of Jehovah (1Chron. 16:2b).</p>	<p>Then the King shall say to those on His right hand, Come, blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34).</p> <p>"Blessed are those whose lawless acts are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will in no way impute sin." (Rom. 4:7–8 Psalm 32:1–2).</p> <p>We are blessed as a result of Jesus coming into Jerusalem and offering Himself on the cross for our sins.</p>	<p>Say among the nations, Jehovah reigns; and the world shall be established; it shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples in uprightness. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fullness of it (Psalm 96:10–11).</p> <p>People are blessed as a result of His coming. We are blessed in His coming, and all will rejoice because of His coming.</p>
<p>And David said to them, "You are the heads of your fathers of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brothers, and you shall bring up the ark of Jehovah, the God of Israel, to the place I have prepared for it. Because you did not do so at the first, Jehovah our God broke in against us, for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance." And the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of Jehovah the God of Israel 1Chron. 15:12–14).</p>	<p>And Jesus went into the temple of God and cast out all those who sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, It is written, "My house shall be called the house of prayer"; but you have made it a den of thieves (Matt. 21:12–13).</p>	<p>He comes to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His faithfulness (Psalm 96:13b).</p> <p>He cleanses the Temple and all believers. When God judges the earth, some will be accepted in the Beloved and others will be thrown into the Lake of Fire.</p>
<p>And David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, How glorious was the king of Israel today, who uncovered himself today in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovers himself! (2Sam. 6:20).</p>	<p>And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things which He did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were angry (Matt. 21:15–16).</p> <p>Some come to Him for eternal healing; and some disparage His coming.</p>	<p>Sing to Jehovah; bless His name, bear news of His salvation day by day. Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonders among all people. For Jehovah is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols; but Jehovah made the heavens (Psalm 96:2–5).</p> <p>Since there are idols and false gods, there are people who worship these gods; so we may assume, they do not look forward to the coming of our Lord.</p>

Although I had to use inference at time in Psalm 96, there are still many parallels between the moving of the Ark into Jerusalem and our Lord coming to Jerusalem on Passover week before His crucifixion.

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In retrospect, the greatest weakness of my exegetical study of this psalm is, I believe I have missed the key to its organization. David's psalms tend to be highly organized, and I don't believe that I quite hit the nail on the head in that respect. However, even though I was not able to nail down the outline of this psalm, the general theme is plain:

The Theme of Psalm 96: Jehovah Elohim is God over all Mankind

1. Jehovah Elohim is God over all the nations.
 - a. We are called upon to proclaim His salvation (i.e., *His Jesus*) to all the nations (v. 2).
 - b. We are to declare His glory and His marvelous deeds to all the nations (v. 3).
2. The gods of the nations are far inferior to Jehovah Elohim
 - a. Jehovah Elohim is to be feared above all other gods (v. 4).
 - b. Their gods are empty, meaningless idols (v. 5a).
 - c. Jehovah Elohim actually made the heavens, where these gods are supposed to reside (v. 5b).
3. These other nations are called upon to recognize Who God is.
 - a. They are to recognize the glory and honor of Jehovah Elohim (vv. 7–8a).
 - b. They are to bring a bloodless offering (their faith) into His courts (v. 8b).
 - c. They are to worship before Him and all the earth should tremble before Him (v. 9).
4. Jehovah Elohim reigns over all.
 - a. He provides a stable orbit for the earth (vv. 10c–11a).
 - b. He will judge all in the earth (vv. 10b, 13b–d).
 - c. All creation is called upon to rejoice because He will judge all the earth (vv. 11–13a).

In pointing out the themes, and following the psalm in order (more or less), I have essentially ended up with an outline. However, most of David's psalms are very carefully constructed, and I believe that I missed that aspect (as has pretty much everyone else).

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However, since we understand this psalm and its basic themes, this now makes the times when it was sung more meaningful. This psalm is sung as David successfully moves the Ark into Jerusalem, and places it into the tent which he prepared for the Ark. This tent which David prepared for the Ark is clearly a temporary residence for the Ark. One approach would have been to bring the Tabernacle into Jerusalem as well and to place the Ark in the Tabernacle (a semi-permanent structure); but David's mind is on building a permanent residence for the Ark (the Temple, which God chose for Solomon to complete). So, now picture this: we have the Ark of God, which represents Jesus Christ in His hypostatic union. The acacia wood represents His humanity and the overlain gold His deity. Once a year, a blood sacrifice is offered up and blood is sprinkled upon this Ark—which represents our Lord on the cross, dying for our sins. David moves this Ark into a tent, which is meant from the start to be a temporary residence. Doesn't that remind you of: **Therefore when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure. Then I said, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Your will, O God."** (Heb. 10:5–7). David is associated with the 1st and 2nd Advents of our Lord, and so, there will only be a temporary tent for the Ark of God, just as our Lord had a body just like ours, but without the indwelling sin. David prepared temporary housing for the Ark of God; God the Father prepared a temporary home—a body—for His Son.

This psalm is also associated with the rebuilding of the Temple, when the dispersed peoples of Israel returned by the edict of restoration by Cyrus the Great (Ezra 1:1–4). The Temple represents the Millennial residence of Jesus Christ on this earth, where He will rule all the earth from Mount Zion. How apropos are the lines: **Say among the nations, Jehovah reigns; and, The world will be established, it will not be moved; He will judge the peoples in**

uprightness. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and the fullness of it. Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it; then the trees of the forest will rejoice before Jehovah; for He comes; for He comes to judge the earth; He will judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His faithfulness (Psalm 96:10–19).

Did David or the exiles fully understand how well this psalm matched the events during which it was sung? They certainly had some idea, as they chose this psalm, but I don't believe that they understood this quite as well as we do today (that is, those who have some doctrine resident in their souls). We know the 1st advent historically and there is more written about the 2nd advent at this time to where we know many more details about it. So, by the Word of God, we are able to even more fully appreciate how appropriate this psalm is to these two historical occasions.

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

As you read through this, keep in mind that this was sung 3000 years ago when David brought the Ark into Jerusalem; and 2500 years ago when the Jews returned to the land and began to rebuild the Temple. Note the universality of this Psalm, for what we would see as very nationalistic celebrations.

A Complete Translation of Psalm 96

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Sing to Jehovah, Declare His Glory and His Jesus among the Gentiles

Sing a new song to Y^ehowah;
O sing to Y^ehowah, all the earth.
Sing to Y^ehowah,
praise [or, *celebrate*] His name;

Sing a new song to Jehovah;
Let all the earth sing a song to Jehovah.
Sing to Jehovah and praise His name;

every day, announce [the good news] of His
deliverance [or, *proclaim His Jesus*].

proclaim His salvation [or, *His Jesus*] every single
day.

Declare His glory among the Gentiles;
[declare] His extraordinary acts among the peoples;
For Y^ehowah [is] great [and immutable]
and [He is] greatly praised [or, *celebrated*];
He [is] feared [and respected] above all gods;
For all the gods of the people [are but] empty idols;
but Y^ehowah made the [two] heavens.

Declare aloud His glory among the Gentiles;
and declare aloud His extraordinary acts among the
peoples;
For Jehovah is great and He is to be greatly praised;
He is feared and respected above all gods;
For all of the gods of the people are but empty, false
gods;
whereas Jehovah made the heavens above.

Majesty and Splendor [are] before Him [or, *in His
sight*];
strength [and refuge] and glory [and beauty] [are] in
His sanctuary.

Before God are Majesty and Splendor;
and within His sanctuary can be found strength,
refuge, glory and beauty.

Jehovah, Who Stabilizes the Earth, Rules over All

Grant to Y^ehowah the families of [various] nations;
ascribe [or, *grant*] to Y^ehowah glory and strength [or,
majesty].
Ascribe to Y^ehowah the honor of His name;

Give to Jehovah the families of various nations;
and give to Jehovah the glory and strength.
Ascribe to the name of Jehovah glory and honor;

A Complete Translation of Psalm 96

A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
<p>bring a tribute offering [to Him] and enter into His villages [or, <i>courts</i>]. Prostrate yourselves toward [or, <i>bow down to</i>] Y^ehowah in the beauty of holiness [or, <i>in holy clothing</i>]; tremble before Him, all the earth.</p>	<p>bring a tribute offering to Him when you enter into His villages. Fall down and do obeisance to Jehovah in the beauty of His holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth.</p>
<p>Say among the peoples [or, <i>the Gentiles</i>], “Y^ehowah reigns [over all]; furthermore, the [entire] earth is firmly established [by Him]— it is not tottering [or, <i>it will not be dislodged; it will not be thrown into disarray</i>]—</p>	<p>Say to all the people of the earth, “Jehovah reigns over all; in fact, by Him, the entire earth has been firmly established— it is not tottering, it will not be dislodged nor will it be thrown into disarray—</p>
<p>He judges [all] the peoples with righteous decisions.”</p>	<p>He judges all mankind with righteous decisions.”</p>
<p>Joy to the World, the King has Come to Judge the Earth</p>	
<p>The heavens rejoice and the earth goes in a circle [in joy]; the sea and its fulness roar [like thunder]. The open field and all that is in it rejoice; then the trees of the forest celebrate [with a loud voice] before Y^ehowah, for He has come;</p>	<p>The heavens rejoice while the earth orbits the sun in joy; the sea and all that is in it roars like thunder. The open field and all that is in it rejoices while the trees of the forest celebrate loudly before Jehovah, Who has arrived.</p>
<p>for He has come to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the people with His faithfulness [and firmness].</p>	<p>He has come to judge all the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and He will judge the people with firmness and faithfulness to His truth.</p>

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