

Psalm 96

All Peoples Commanded to Praise God Because He Is Coming to Set the Earth Aright!

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A1 ALL THE PEOPLES COMMANDED TO PRAISE YAHWEH IN SONG AND SPEECH 96:1-6

B1 The Call to Praise 96:1-3

- C1 The first command to sing: {1} **Sing**¹ 96:1a
 - D1 The object of the song: to the LORD
 - D2 The nature of the song: a new song;
- C2 The second command to sing: **Sing** 96:1b
 - D1 The object of the song: to the LORD,
 - D2 The singers of the song – the global recipients of the command: **all the earth**.²
- C3 The third command to sing: {2} **Sing** 96:2
 - D1 The object of the song: to the LORD,
 - D2 The purpose of the song: **bless** His name;
 - D3 The content of the song – a positive enunciation of Yahweh's deliverance: **Proclaim good tidings** of His salvation
 - D4 The frequency of the song: from day to day.
- C4 The additional content and intended audience of the song: The global imperative of the publicity 96:3
 - D1 Content: {3} **Tell** of His glory
 - D2 Audience: among **the nations**,

¹ 96:1 - Sing: All the words in red are imperatives, commands. The exceptions are the instances of “Let” in verses 11-12 – there they are imperfects with jussive, or imperatival, force, as in “Let be glad – (the heavens),” etc.

² 96:1 - all the earth: There is an unusually global, Gentile scope to this psalm. I have endeavored to call attention to this fact by placing all the terms that indicate this global address in **bold print**. The terms include **all the earth**, **the nations**, **(all) the peoples**, and **families of the peoples**.

D3 Content: His wonderful deeds

D4 Audience: among **all the peoples**.

B2 REASONS FOR PRAISE 96:4-6

C1 The greatness of Yahweh: {4} For great is the LORD 96:4

D1 The quantity of praise due Him: and greatly to be praised;

D2 The superlative of fear due Him: He is to be feared above all gods.

C2 The creative reality of Yahweh 96:5

D1 The non-entity of the peoples' gods: {5} For all the gods of **the peoples** are idols,

D2 The infinite creative power of Yahweh: But the LORD made the heavens.

C3 The grandeur and majesty emanating from Him: {6} Splendor³ and majesty⁴ are before Him, 96:6

C4 The power and glory emanating from Him in His temple: Strength⁵ and

³ 96:6 - splendor (1935 - *howd*): Splendor (*howd* - 1935) and majesty (*hadar* - 1926) appear to be virtually synonymous, especially when used in the same verse, as they are 6X in the OT. *howd*, in NAS95, is translated splendor or splendid 9X, majesty or majestic 6X, honor or honored 4X, authority 2X, and glory, vigor, beauty, and natural color 1X each.

Strong's definition: 1935. *howd*, *hode*; from an unused root; grandeur (i.e. an imposing form and appearance):--beauty, comeliness, excellency, glorious, glory, goodly, honour, majesty.

Indeed, with a little imagination, *grandeur* could successfully be employed as a translation of each occurrence of *howd*, and, in my estimation, would be a better translation.

⁴ 96:6 - majesty: of the 30 translations of *hadar* (1926) in NAS95, majesty is a runaway favorite with 17X, followed by splendor 8X, honor 2X, and beautiful, array, and dignity 1X each. Strong: 1926. *hadar*, *haw-dawr'*; from 1921; magnificence, i.e. ornament or splendor:--beauty, comeliness, excellency, glorious, glory, goodly, honour, majesty.

⁵ 96:6 - strength: There are five passages which combine glory (*kabowd* 3519) and strength (*'oz* 5797): 1 Chron. 16:28; Ps 29:1; 62:7; 63:2; 96:7. All translate *'oz* strength except for Ps. 63:2, which (correctly, I believe), renders it power because it is describing God's person (in the context of the tabernacle / temple), which is also the case in Ps. 96:6 and 8.

In Psalm 132:8, *'oz* is combined with *'arown*, ark, promoting the idea that in Psalm 96:6 God's personal presence is under consideration, not the beauty of His sanctuary.

In my estimation, *strength* is a good translation when describing a man's personal strength -- if he can bench press 400 pounds, we would agree he is a strong man. However, when describing God, the term strength seems too anthropomorphic -- God doesn't walk around flexing His muscles. It seems more appropriate to describe the Supreme Spirit as being *powerful*. Thus my proposed translation in this context is the more impersonal *power*, as opposed to *strength*, even though the latter term, in other contexts, is far and away the preferred translation, as shown in the chart at the end of the analysis.

beauty⁶ are in His sanctuary.

A2 ALL THE PEOPLES COMMANDED TO SUBMIT TO GOD IN WORSHIP 96:7-10

B1 The Specifications of Global Praise 96:7-8

- C1 Attributive, world-wide praise: {7} **Ascribe** to the LORD, **O families of the peoples, Ascribe** to the LORD glory and strength.⁷ 96:7
- C2 Nominative praise: {8} **Ascribe** to the LORD the glory of His name; 96:8
- C3 Sacrificial praise: **Bring** an offering
- C4 Corporate, intimate praise: and **come** into His courts.

B2 The Submission Expected in Global Praise 96:9-10

- C1 Holy praise: {9} **Worship** the LORD in holy attire; 96:9
- C2 Humble praise: **Tremble** before Him,
- C3 Universal praise: **all the earth.**
- C4 Submissive praise: {10} **Say** among **the nations**, "The LORD reigns;⁸ Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved;⁹ 96:10
- C5 Accountable praise: He will judge **the peoples** with equity."

⁶ 96:6 - beauty (*tiph'arah*, 8597): As the chart at the end of the analysis shows, *glory* would be a more appropriate translation here. Many translators choose *beauty* because they believe the last half of v. 6 describes the physical appearance of the sanctuary, or temple. I believe *tiph'arah*, in this context, rather characterizes God's shekinah glory appearing between the cherubim. Note that Psalm 78:61, likely a reference to the ark, employs both '*oz*, 5797 and *tiph'arah*, 8597 in the same verse, as does Ps. 96:6. Likewise, Ps. 89:17 uses both terms in reference to God, where *tiph'arah* is translated glory and '*oz*, strength.

⁷ 96:7 - strength: '*oz* 5797. Again, in this context, I prefer *power*.

⁸ 96:10 - the LORD reigns: Derek Kidner (*Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* [TOTC], Psalms 73-150, p. 381) writes, "The decisiveness of the Hebrew verb and the exultant response in 11-13 point to a new and overwhelming asserting of sovereignty rather than a timeless theological truth. It announces God's advent, the Day of the Lord." I agree with Kidner, but I take his statement a step further. That future Day of the Lord has in mind the return of Jesus Christ to reign upon earth over the nations with a rod of iron (Psalm 2; Zech. 14; Matt. 24:29-31; 25:31-46; Rev. 19:11-20:6).

⁹ 96:10 - the world ... will not be moved: Derek Kidner, p. 381: "The first and last lines of verse 10 make it additionally clear that this is a prophecy of perfect government, not a pronouncement on – of all things! – the earth's rotation, as an old controversy suggested." That is true up to a point, but I believe there is more here. The initial referent is Christ's return to rule the nations. When He returns, nature itself will be altered, receiving a new lease on life (Isa. 11:1-10; 55:12-13; Ezek. 47:1-12; Amos 9:13-15). The ultimate referent is the rule of God and Christ from New Jerusalem over New Earth completely unblemished by sin and evil (Rom. 8:18-23; 2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1-22:5).

A3 ALL NATURE EXHORTED TO EXULT IN YAHWEH'S COMING JUDGMENT 96:11-13

B1 The Call to Exult 96:11-12

- C1 Heavens: *{11}* **Let** the heavens be glad, 96:11
- C2 Earth: and **let** the earth rejoice;¹⁰
- C3 Sea: **Let** the sea roar, and all it contains;
- C4 Field: *{12}* **Let** the field exult, and all that is in it. 96:12
- C5 Forest: Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy

B2 The Reason to Exult 96:13

- C1 The object of exultation; *{13}* Before the LORD,
- C2 The reason for exultation: for He is coming,¹¹
- C3 The focus of exultation: For He is coming to judge¹² the **earth**.
 - D1 He will judge the **world** in righteousness
 - D2 And the **peoples** in His faithfulness.

¹⁰ 96:11 ff. - Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: "The belief of fallen man that *righteousness, truth* (i.e. dependability), the rule of justice, and the Lord himself are the enemies of joy, is scouted by this passage" (Derek Kidner, pp. 381-382).

¹¹ 96:13 - coming: The fulfillment of this prophecy is the Second Coming of Christ!

¹² 96:13 - judge: Christ is seen as judge in the following passages: In His First Advent, He did not come to judge, but to save from judgment (John 3:15-18). In John 5:22-30 He stated He has been given all authority to judge (in the future). By His sacrificial death on the cross, He brought judgment upon Satan (John 12:31-33).

During the Tribulation period prior to His Second Coming, He will evaluate the Church at the judgment seat of Christ (Rom 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3; 2 Cor 5:10). He will judge the entire earth as the Lamb of God worthy to open the seven sealed book of judgment (Rev 5-8), the seventh of which constitutes the seven trumpet judgments (Rev. 8-11), the seventh of which constitutes the seven bowl judgments (Rev. 15-18). The people of the earth recognize that in these catastrophes the Lamb and God Himself are venting their wrath upon the earth (Rev. 6:15-17).

At His Second Advent, Jesus, as the Word of God and King of Kings, will "tread the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty" (Rev. 19:15). He will judge the armies and forces assembled against Him by annihilating them (Isaiah 63:1-6; Rev. 19:19-21). He will judge the survivors of the nation of Israel (Ezek. 20:33-38; Matt. 25:1-13; 14-30) and the survivors of the Gentiles (Matt. 25:31-46).

In Isaiah 11:3-5 Christ will, during His Millennial Kingdom, judge the world in truth and fairness, in righteousness and faithfulness, bringing justice for the poor and the afflicted, and final justice for the wicked.

After the final rebellion at the end of Christ's Millennial Kingdom is quelled (Rev. 20:7-10), Christ Himself, I believe, will sit upon the Great White Throne, there to judge all the wicked dead of all ages. There doom, not having their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, is the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15).

Yahweh's (Christ's) coming to judge the earth (Ps. 96:13) is a cause for great joy (Ps. 96:12)! Now at last, corruption on the earth will be death with summarily, justice will prevail, and the saints will rejoice!

Addendum

Word Study Chart of 'oz, "Strength," "Power"

'oz 5797

strength, power in various translations

Word	NASB	NIV	Total	Word	NASB	NIV	Total
strong, strength	69	51	120	firm		1	1
power, great (power)	12	12	24	stouthearted		1	1
might, mighty	7	13	20	secure		1	1
stronghold	2	4	6	loud	1		1
fortress, fortified	1	3	4	vigorously		1	1
praise		2	2	stern	1		1
great		1	1	hard		1	1
feeble		1	1	stubborn		1	1

Word Study Chart of tiph'arah, "Glory," "Beauty"

tiph'arah, 8597

glory, beauty in various translations

Translation	NASB	NIV	Translation	NASB	NIV
glory, glorious	24	18	pride	1	1
beauty, beautiful	16	4	pomp	1	0
splendor	1	9	elation	0	1
honor	2	6	adornment	1	0
fine, finery	0	4	look	0	1
boasted	1	2			

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF PSALM 96

Prepared by James T. Bartsch

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Email Contact: jbartsch@wordexplain.com

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