
PSALM 95: 1 Oh come, let's sing to the LORD. Let's shout aloud to the rock of our salvation!

An invitation to praise God, Psa 95:1, Psa 95:2. The reason on which this is founded, the majesty and dominion of God, Psa 95:3-5. An invitation to pray to God, Psa 95:6. And the reasons on which that is founded, Psa 95:7. Exhortation not to act as their fathers had done, who rebelled against God, and were cast out of his favor, Psa 95:8-11.

This Psalm is also without a title, both in the Hebrew and Chaldee: but is attributed to David by the Vulgate, Septuagint, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Syriac; and by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Heb 4:3-7. Calmet and other eminent critics believe that it was composed during the time of the captivity, and that the apostle only followed the common opinion in quoting it as the production of David, because in general the Psalter was attributed to him.

The Psalm is a solemn invitation to the people, when assembled for public worship, to praise God from a sense of his great goodness; and to be attentive to the instructions they were about to receive from the reading and expounding of the law; and on these accounts it has been long used in the Christian Church, at the commencement of public service, to prepare the people's minds to worship God in spirit and in truth.

Houbigant, and other learned divines, consider this Psalm as composed of three parts.

1. The part of the people, Psa 95:1 to the middle of Psa 95:7.
2. The part of the priest or prophet from the middle of Psa 95:7 to the end of Psa 95:8.
3. The part of Jehovah, Psa 95:9-11. It is written as a part of the preceding Psalm by nine of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS.; but certainly it must have been originally an ode by itself, as the subject is widely different from that in the foregoing.

Verse 1

O come, let us sing - Let us praise God, not only with the most joyful accents which can be uttered by the voice; but let us also praise him with hearts tuned to gratitude, from a full sense of the manifold benefits we have already received.

The rock of our salvation - The strong Fortress in which we have always found safety, and the Source whence we have always derived help for our souls. In both these senses the word rock, as applied to God, is used in the Scriptures.

PSALM 95: 2 Let's come before his presence with thanksgiving. Let's extol him with songs!

Verse 2

Let us come before his presence - פָּנָיו *panaiv*, his faces, with thanksgiving, בְּתוֹדָה *bethodah*, with confession, or with the confession-offering. Praise him for what he has all ready done, and confess your unworthiness of any of his blessings. The confession-offering, the great atoning sacrifice, can alone render your acknowledgment of sin and thanksgiving acceptable to a holy and just God.

PSALM 95: 3 For the LORD is a great God, a great King above all gods.

Verse 3

For the Lord is a great God - Or, "A great God is Jehovah, and a great King above all gods;" or, "God is a great King over all." The Supreme Being has three names here: אל El, יהוה Jehovah, אלהים Elohim, and we should apply none of them to false gods. The first implies his strength; the second his being and essence; the third, his covenant relation to mankind. In public worship these are the views we should entertain of the Divine Being.

PSALM 95: 4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth. The heights of the mountains are also his.

Verse 4

In his hand are the deep places of the earth - The greatest deeps are fathomed by him.
The strength of the hills is his also - And to him the greatest heights are accessible,

PSALM 95: 5 The sea is his, and he made it. His hands formed the dry land.

Verse 5

The sea is his - The sea and the dry land are equally his, for he has formed them both, and they are his property. He governs and disposes of them as he sees good. He is the absolute Master of universal nature. Therefore there is no other object of worship nor of confidence.

PSALM 95: 6 Oh come, let's worship and bow down. Let's kneel before the LORD, our Maker,

Verse 6

O come, let us worship - Three distinct words are used here to express three different acts of adoration:

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

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

PSALM 95: 7 for he is our God. We are the people of his pasture, and the sheep in his care. Today, oh that you would hear his voice!

Verse 7

For he is our God - Here is the reason for this service. He has condescended to enter into a covenant with us, and he has taken us for his own; therefore: -

We are the people of his pasture - Or, rather, as the Chaldee, Syriac, Vulgate, and Ethiopic read, "We are his people, and the sheep of the pasture of his hand." We are his own; he feeds and governs us, and his powerful hand protects us.

To-day if ye will hear his voice - To-day-you have no time to lose; to-morrow may be too late. God calls to-day; to-morrow he may be silent. This should commence the eighth verse, as it begins what is supposed to be the part of the priest or prophet who now exhorts the people; as if he had said: Seeing you are in so good a spirit, do not forget your own resolutions, and harden not your hearts, "as your fathers did in Meribah and Massah, in the wilderness;" the same fact and the same names as are mentioned Exo 17:7; when the people murmured at Rephidim, because they had no water; hence it was called Meribah, contention or provocation, and Massah, temptation.

PSALM 95: 8 Don't harden your heart, as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness,

PSALM 95: 9 when your fathers tempted me, tested me, and saw my work.

Verse 9

When your fathers tempted me - Tried me, by their insolence, unbelief, and blasphemy. They proved me - they had full proof of my power to save and to destroy. There they saw my works - they saw that nothing was too hard for God.

PSALM 95: 10 Forty long years I was grieved with that generation, and said, "It is a people that errs in their heart. They have not known my ways."

Verse 10

Forty years long - They did nothing but murmur, disbelieve, and rebel, from the time they began their journey at the Red Sea till they passed over Jordan, a period of forty years. During all this time God was grieved by that generation; yet he seldom showed forth that judgment which they most righteously had deserved.

It is a people that do err in their heart - Or, according to the Chaldee, These are a people whose idols are in their hearts. At any rate they had not God there.

They have not known my ways - The verb יָדָע yada, to know, is used here, as in many other parts of Scripture, to express approbation. They knew God's ways well enough; but they did not like them; and would not walk in them. "These wretched men," says the old Psalter, "were gifnen to the lufe of this lyfe: knewe noght my ways of mekenes, and charlte: for thi in my wreth I sware to thaim; that es, I sett stably that if that sall entre in till my rest;" that is, they shall not enter into my rest.

This ungrateful people did not approve of God's ways - they did not enter into his designs - they did not conform to his commands - they paid no attention to his miracles - and did not acknowledge the benefits which they received from his hands; therefore God determined that they should not enter into the rest which he had promised to them on condition that, if they were obedient, they should inherit the promised land. So none of those who came out of Egypt, except Joshua and Caleb, entered into Canaan; all the rest died in the wilderness, wherein, because of their disobedience, God caused them to wander forty years.

It is well known that the land of Canaan was a type of heaven, where, after all his toils, the good and faithful servant is to enter into the joy of his Lord. And as those Israelites in the wilderness were not permitted to enter into the land of Canaan because of their unbelief, their distrust of God's providence, and consequent disobedience, St. Paul hence takes occasion to exhort the Jews, Heb 4:2-11, to accept readily the terms offered to them by the Gospel. He shows that the words of the present Psalm are applicable to the state of Christianity; and intimates to them that, if they persisted in obstinate refusal of those gracious offers, they likewise would fall according to the same example of unbelief - Dodd.

PSALM 95: 11 Therefore I swore in my wrath, "They won't enter into my rest."
