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PSALM 96: 1 Sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth.

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All the inhabitants of the earth are invited to praise the Lord, Psa 96:1-3. His supreme majesty, Psa 96:3-6. The tribes of Israel are invited to glorify him, Psa 96:7-9; and to proclaim him among the heathen, Psa 96:10. The heavens and the earth are commanded to rejoice in him, Psa 96:11-13.

This Psalm has no title, either in the Hebrew or Chaldee. The Syriac: "Of David. A prophecy of the advent of Christ and the calling of the Gentiles to believe in him." The Vulgate, Septuagint, Ethiopic, and Arabic have, "A Song of David, when the House was built after the Captivity." We have seen in 1Chr 16:23-33 (note) a Psalm nearly like this, composed by David, on bringing the ark to Sion, from the house of Obed-edom. See the notes on the above place. But the Psalm, as it stands in the Chronicles, has thirty verses; and this is only a section of it, from the twenty-third to the thirty-third. It is very likely that this part was taken from the Psalm above mentioned, to be used at the dedication of the second temple. The one hundred and fifth Psalm is almost the same as that in Chronicles, but much more extensive. Where they are in the main the same, there are differences for which it is not easy to account.

#### Verse 1

Sing unto the Lord a new song - A song of peculiar excellence, for in this sense the term new is repeatedly taken in the Scriptures. He has done extraordinary things for us, and we should excel in praise and thanksgiving.

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PSALM 96: 2 Sing to the LORD! Bless his name! Proclaim his salvation from day to day!

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#### Verse 2

Show forth his salvation from day to day - The original is very emphatic, בשרו מיום ליום ישועתו, basseru miyom leyom yeshuatho "Preach the Gospel of his salvation from day to day." To the same effect the Septuagint, Ευαγγελιζεσθε ημεραν εξ ημερας το σωτηρι ο ν αυτου, "Evangelize his salvation from day to day."

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PSALM 96: 3 Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous works among all the peoples.

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#### Verse 3

Declare his glory among the heathen - The heathen do not know the true God: as his being and attributes are at the foundation of all religion, these are the first subjects of instruction for the Gentile world. Declare, ספּרו sapperu, detail, number out his glory, כבודו kebedo, his splendor and excellence.

His wonders among all people - Declare also to the Jews his wonders, נפלאותיו niphleothaiv, his miracles. Dwell on the works which he shall perform in Judea. The miracles which Christ wrought among the Jews were full proof that he was not only the Messiah, but the mighty power of God.

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PSALM 96: 4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised! He is to be feared above all gods.

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Verse 4

He is to be feared above all gods - I think the two clauses of this verse should be read thus: -

Jehovah is great, and greatly to be praised.

Elohim is to be feared above all.

I doubt whether the word אלהים Elohim is ever, by fair construction, applied to false gods or idols. The contracted form in the following verse appears to have this meaning.

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PSALM 96: 5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

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Verse 5

All the gods of the nations are idols - אלהי elohey. All those reputed or worshipped as gods among the heathens are אלילים elilim, vanities, emptinesses, things of nought. Instead of being Elohim, they are elilim; they are not only not God, but they are nothing." "Jehovah made the heavens." He who is the creator is alone worthy of adoration.

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PSALM 96: 6 Honour and majesty are before him. Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

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Verse 6

Honour and majesty are before him - Does this refer to the cloud of his glory that preceded the ark in their journeying through the wilderness? The words strength and beauty, and glory and strength, Psa 96:7, are those by which the ark is described, Psa 78:61.

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PSALM 96: 7 Ascribe to the LORD, you families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

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Verse 7

Ye kindreds of the people - Ye families, all the tribes of Israel in your respective divisions.

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PSALM 96: 8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to his name. Bring an offering, and come into his courts.

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Verse 8

Come into his courts - Probably referring to the second temple. The reference must be either to the tabernacle or temple.

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PSALM 96: 9 Worship the LORD in holy array. Tremble before him, all the earth.

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Verse 9

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness - I think בְּהַדְרַת קֹדֶשׁ behadrath kodesh, signifies holy ornaments, such as the high priest wore in his ministrations. These were given him for glory and beauty; and the psalmist calls on him to put on his sacerdotal garments, to bring his offering, מִנְחָה minchah, and come into the courts of the Lord, and perform his functions, and make intercession for the people.

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PSALM 96: 10 Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns." The world is also established. It can't be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity.

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Verse 10

Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth - Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, quotes this passage thus: Εἰπατε ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσι, ὁ Κύριος ἐβασίλευσε ἀπο τοῦ ξύλου, "Say among the nations, the Lord ruleth 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. The 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.

The world also shall be established - The word תֵּבֵל tebel signifies the habitable globe, and may be a metonymy here, the container put for the contained. And many think that by it the Church is intended; as the Lord, who is announced to the heathen as reigning, is understood to be Jesus Christ; and his judging among the people, his establishing the holy Gospel among them, and governing the nations by its laws.

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PSALM 96: 11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice. Let the sea roar, and its fullness!

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Verse 11

Let the heavens rejoice - The publication of the Gospel is here represented as a universal blessing; the heavens the earth, the sea, and its inhabitants, the field, the grass, and the trees of the wood, are all called to rejoice at this glorious event. This verse is well and harmoniously translated in the old Psalter: -

Fayne be hevenes - and the erth glad;

Styrde be the see, - and the fulnes of it;

Joy sal felde, - and al that ere in thaim.

And the paraphrase is at least curious: -

Hevens, haly men. Erthe, meke men that receyves lare (learning). Felde, that is even men, mylde and softe: they shall joy in Criste. And all that is in thaim, that es, strength, wyttes & skill."

I shall give the remaining part of this ancient paraphrase, which is an echo of the opinion of most of the Latin fathers. Psa 96:12 Thou sal glad al the trese of woddes - Thou, that is in another lyfe. Trese of woddes. - Synful men that were fyrst withouten frut, and sithen taken into God's temple. Psa 96:13. For he coms, he coms. He coms, fyrste to be man - Sythen he comes to deme the erth.

He sal deme in ebenes the erth: - and folk in his sothfastnes. Nothing is evener, or sothfaster, than that he geder with hym perfyte men; to deme and to deperte to the rig hande (thaim) that did mercy: - pase to the lefte hande (thaim) that did it nogt.

The psalmist here in the true spirit of poetry, gives life and intelligence to universal nature, producing them all as exulting in the reign of the Messiah, and the happiness which should take place in the earth when the Gospel should be universally preached. These predictions seem to be on the eve of complete fulfillment. Lord, hasten the time! For a fuller explanation see the following analysis.

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PSALM 96: 12 Let the field and all that is in it exult! Then all the trees of the woods shall sing for joy

PSALM 96: 13 before the LORD; for he comes, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, the peoples with his truth.

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