

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

XCVI: Anticipating The Coming World Rule Of The Lord

(Psalm 96:1-13)

I. Introduction

- A. We believers in Christ live in a very imperfect age where sin and its negative effects abound.
- B. Thus, we do well to focus on our wonderful hope of God's future, coming world kingdom of stability, fairness, joy, righteousness and truth, and Psalm 96:1-13 in its historical setting gives us guidance to that end:

II. Anticipating The Coming World Rule Of The Lord, Psalm 96:1-13.

- A. There are no introductory remarks in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Bib. Heb., p. 1059), so the numbering systems of the Hebrew text and of English Bible are the same, and we stay with the English Bible numbering system.
- B. Accordingly, we translate Psalm 96:1-13 (as follows):
 - 1. "Sing to Jahweh a new song; sing to Jahweh all the earth," Psalm 96:1.
 - 2. "Sing to Jahweh, praise His Name; proclaim His salvation from day to day," Psalm 96:2.
 - 3. "Declare His glory among the nations, His wonderful acts among all of the peoples," Psalm 96:3.
 - 4. "because great is Jahweh, and most worthy of praise; He (emph. pro.) is to be feared above all gods," v. 4.
 - 5. "because all of the gods of the nations are idols, but Jahweh made the heavens," Psalm 96:5.
 - 6. "Splendor and majesty are in His presence; strength and glory are in His sanctuary," Psalm 96:6.
 - 7. "Ascribe to Jahweh, families of nations, ascribe to Jahweh glory and strength," Psalm 96:7.
 - 8. "Ascribe to Jahweh the glory due His Name; bring an offering and come into His courts," Psalm 96:8.
 - 9. "Worship Jahweh in the splendor of His holiness; tremble before Him, all the earth," Psalm 96:9.
 - 10. "Say among the nations, 'Jahweh reigns.' The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved (into disorder); He will govern the peoples with equity," Psalm 96:10
 - 11. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let th sea and all that is in it resound;" (Psalm 96:11)
 - 12. "let the fields and all in them be jubilant. Thereupon all the trees of the forest will sing for joy;" (v. 12)
 - 13. "they will sing before Jahweh, for He comes; for He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in His truth," Psalm 96:13.
- C. We note important observations about this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. This psalm parallels the 1 Chronicles 16:23-33 psalm performed when David moved the ark of the Lord into its place of honor in Jerusalem. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to Psalm 96)
 - 2. Accordingly, its historical setting is rich in insight and application for our era as follows:
 - a. The ark had been taken from Israel by the Philistines in the days of the high priest Eli (1 Sam. 4), but its presence there had caused a great plague from God on the Philistines and the destruction of their idol Dagon so that the Philistines had sent the ark back to Israel on a cart drawn by milk cows, 1 Sam. 5:1-7:2. The ark stayed in Kiriath Jearim in Israel about 100 years until David was able to move it to Jerusalem after initially failing because his first effort to transport it violated Scripture, B. K. C., O. T., p. 438, 463.
 - b. All these events fit the psalm's them that calls for God to be honored above the false gods of the pagan nations (Psalm 96:4-5), an expression of honor from God's people and the Gentiles alike (Psalm 96:7-8).
 - c. Based on God's gracious deliverance of the ark from Philistine territory to Israel and of God's 100-year grace and patience with Israel until the ark finally arrived in Jerusalem, Psalm 96 anticipates the Messianic kingdom when God rules the world in stability (v. 10a,b), fairness (v. 11-13a), righteousness (v. 13b) and truth (v. 13c), what applies to all eras of believers who await Christ's coming Messianic Kingdom.

Lesson: For us believers living in the Church era before the Messianic Kingdom, Psalm 96 encourages us that regardless how spiritually bleak the landscape appears to be with God's own people or how strong the ungodly seem, God is sovereign, omnipotent and faithful, and He will fulfill His promise to establish His Kingdom as seen in His very gracious, sovereign involvements with the ark between and including the eras of Eli and David.

Application: (1) Regardless how unstable, unfair, sinful and deceitful are the circumstances or people we believers must face in our era, nor how spritually defeated we ourselves become, God wants us to be encouraged from how He arranged for His ark of the covenant not only to be taken from apostate Israel, but sovereignly preserved and returned in David's era as a sample of the REALITY of His future establishment of Christ's Kingdom. (2) May we then always abound in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labor is not in vain in Him, 1 Corinthians 15:58.