

**PSALMS: DIARIES OF GODLY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS**  
**Psalm Ninety-Six - The Foundation For EFFECTIVE World Peace**  
**(Psalm 96:1-13)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. With the beginning of a New Year, hope for blessing and bounty for one and all tops many a wish list.
- B. However, one only has to read the papers on troubles in Iraq, Bosnia or Algeria with its recent bloodbaths, let alone the social or economic injustices in our own country to know that peace is often just a dream!
- C. The question arises, "What is the best **way** to go about seeking world peace?" One Christian book suggests that Christians in America attend political party precinct committee meetings, financially support political campaigns, etc. to make a difference. It is suggested in this book that such activity will turn the nation around for God, and then the nation can make the world a different place!
- D. Psalm 96:1-13 provides the true foundation for world peace and blessing, and shows us a format of function for that effective route to be realized.

**II. The Foundation For EFFECTIVE World Peace, Psalm 96:1-13.**

- A. This psalm parallels the content of 1 Chronicles 16:23-33 where David praised the Lord upon the return of the ark of the covenant after it had been in the hands of the Philistines, Ryr. St. Bib., KJV ftn, Ps. 96.
- B. The content of the psalm mirrors the events that had led to the ark's return to Israel:
  - 1. When the ark had been taken by the Philistines, God glorified Himself before the Philistines:
    - a. The Philistines had captured the ark in a tragic battle in Israel where God's help had departed from the nation due to its sin and the sin of its leaders under the weak High Priest, Eli, cf. 1 Samuel 4.
    - b. However, the Lord caused great troubles for the Philistines into whose hands had fallen the ark as even the false god, Dagon, had fallen prostrate to the ark of God, 1 Samuel 5:4-5.
    - c. Accordingly, the worried Philistines had sent the ark back to Israel, 1 Samuel 6:1-7:2.
  - 2. Thus, the psalm ordered all the earth continually to praise Israel's covenant Jahweh God, Ps. 96:1-2.
  - 3. God's glory and wonderful acts were to be declared among the nations due to God's greatness above all other false gods of the Gentiles, Ps. 96:3-4.
  - 4. As typified in the collapse of the idol, Dagon before God's ark of the covenant, the psalmist called for all to worship the Lord as He alone was the Creator, and all the Gentile gods but created idols, 96:5-10a.
- C. Looking forward to the Messianic Kingdom, the psalmist then focuses on God's rule over the nations that will produce blessing, and notes the following characteristics about that reign:
  - 1. In the Messianic age to come, the world will be firmly established. It will be a place of security where government disorder will not exist, Psalm 96:10b.
  - 2. This blessing will arise from God's ruling the nations with fairness, Ps. 96:10c.
  - 3. Consequently, there will be a rich bounty of fulfillment throughout the universe, Ps. 96:11-13:
    - a. The psalmist calls for the heavens, the earth and sea with its contents to rejoice, Ps. 96:11.
    - b. He calls for the fields and all in them to be jubilant along with the trees of the forests, Ps. 96:12.
    - c. The cause of such joy will be Israel's God, Jahweh's arrival to the earth to judge the earth in righteousness and truth, Ps. 96:13. (see also Zech. 14:1-21)

***Lesson: True stability, bounty and peace with joy will be the product of the reign of GOD when He PERSONALLY comes in the Person of Jesus Christ to rule the world's nations from Jerusalem. Accordingly, to work for effective world peace, we need to focus on recruiting subjects for God's Kingdom from the nations in accord with Matthew 28:19-20 RATHER than trying well-meaning but unproductive actions to usher in world equity and righteousness APART FROM God's plan!***

***Application: (1) On the one hand, the Christian should be law abiding and a "salt" influence in his world for the good -- passages like 1 Peter 2:13-17 and Romans 13:6-8 indicate as much. (2) However, effective world peace and bounty will NEVER arrive until the PRINCE OF PEACE comes onto the earth -- that is a Biblical REALITY! Thus, the way to work for world peace with any kind of lasting results is NOT by our making political, governmental involvement our main thrust, but by working to recruit subjects for Christ's Kingdom by way of the Gospel's proclamation!***