

Psalms 95 and 96 have no title heading. Psalm 94 is the first of three relating to the coming of the King to put down all enemies and all evil and to reign over the earth forever. The earth is His. He purchased it with the blood of the Cross. It will never again fall into the hands of the Devil and his angels nor of wicked men.

Men of faith have anticipated the coming of the Messiah (Christ), God's Anointed, since God promised the Seed of the woman to Eve in the Garden. He has indeed come once already as the Son of Man, but was not recognized and not received by His people. In fact they crucified Him. There on the cross, shedding His blood, He accomplished a three fold redemption.

- I. The Church, the redeemed, a body of believers from among Jews and Gentiles to be His Bride and heavenly people who will reign over the earth with Him.
- II. His earthly people, the nation of Israel, who crucified Him but as a remnant emerges purged from the great Tribulation to populate the earth as His own people, serving as channels of blessing to the Gentiles and leading the earth in praising and blessing Him.
- III. The whole earth itself and all in it, the nations of Gentiles, all animate and all inanimate life and all lifeless features as well, Psalm 95:3-6; 96:10-13.

All of the above are named in these two Psalms. They are all His, first as Creator then as Redeemer. All are portrayed as rejoicing upon His return and in His continued presence over them and with them upon earth. What a blessed time that will be indeed! And it will be so forever. May we rejoice in faith anticipating the time when He receives His rightful due from all His redeemed Creation.

Meanwhile the unredeemable, all that remains opposed to Him will be brought under His subjection. Idols and false gods will be destroyed, abolished, never to be seen again. The chief rebel, Satan, and His angels will be imprisoned for a thousand years, Revelation 20, and righteousness, peace and rejoicing will break out and cover the earth as He reigns.

These Psalms will be sung first in faith in anticipation as now. But after the Rapture, as the Tribulation progresses, they will be sung with deep yearning and anticipation in faith. Later, as the Day dawns on earth and this wonderful Age begins, they will be sung in the full reality of it – in the glory they will then be enjoying every minute of every day for eternity.

We rejoice now too in anticipation of the time when our Lord will finally receive His earthly people and inheritance and be given all of the glory due Him. And we rejoice in anticipation of His earthly people receiving the promises long awaited. The Jewish remnant coming out of the Tribulation will lead the earth in rejoicing and will spread His glory worldwide to the Gentiles who harbored them while in flight from the Beast and the False Prophet. What

a wonderful mission to undertake. No more of those prideful Jewish exclusive attitudes towards the Gentiles, but an inclusive drawing of them to Christ their Messiah who will then be reigning in Jerusalem.

Singing will characterize that time on earth. The Jews, long under the blindness and curse of their rejection of their Savior now sing. In Psalm 95:1 the words translated "sing" and "joyful noise" depicts loud, enthusiastic, roaring cheers and chants of celebration. Like the spontaneous roar of a huge crowd we hear today at a game: "Touch down!" "Home run!" "He scores!" But this is no game and this is no ordinary celebrity. No, not a momentary shout as in a game or the Olympics, nor polite applause after a musical event, nor enthusiastic celebration of a political convention upon having nominated their candidate for office, but a prolonged spontaneous response to the wonderful sight of the Lord as He appears with His Bride and commences His earthly reign. In contrast "the new song," (96:1) is a sweet, melodious song of peace and contentment.

Not only is the Lord Jesus acknowledged as their Maker but as their Shepherd. They voluntarily submit themselves and their well being to Him as the the sheep of His pasture, 95:7. He will care fore them, provide for them, cure them of the injuries and diseases suffered under their persecution in the Tribulation. "The Lord is my Shepherd" will be fulfilled literally and completely in those days. He is the great Shepherd, Ps. 23, and Chief Shepherd, Ps. 24.

Yet there is a solemn note of warning in Psalm 95 (7b -11). A sharp recalling of events of thousands of years before. Of rebellion and selfish murmuring and striving with God by the children of Israel in the wilderness as they began on their way from Egypt to the promised land. Unchanged, their children do it again near the end of their forty years pilgrimage. Apparently the vast majority of those who had been set free from slavery to Pharaoh did not have saving faith in their Savior God despite the wondrous signs and deliverance they had witnessed as they escaped. These doubted God's love and His power to bring them in to Canaan. Not only were they consigned to die in the wilderness short of their goal, they apparently perished there in unbelief. This warning is apt and needed for the remnant of Israel in the Tribulation. For even while waiting for the return of the King this suffering godly remnant of Israel will be sorely tried and persecuted. Their world will be a far more difficult "wilderness" for faith than that which Israel traversed between Egypt and Canaan 34 centuries ago.

Hebrews 3 & 4 draws lessons from the warnings of Psalm 95 applying them to Jews professing to be Christians. Shouldn't professing Christendom today give heed as well? And believers today should also give heed, if our walk is to fulfill the desires of our Lord who saved us.

(over)

We do not read of any of the Israelis participating in the last rebellion of the nations under Satan. But many of the descendants of the Gentiles will chafe under what they will view as a rigorous authoritarian (though beneficent) dictator (the Lord Jesus Christ). He will indeed strictly and perfectly enforce righteousness in His Kingdom on His earth. Yet many then will fail to believe and bow to the King of Glory. They will be punished promptly by death (Isaiah 65:20) if they dare to sin openly. The rest will hide out and feign obedience, (Psalm 18:44 [margin]; 66:3;

81:15 [NAS]). After 1000 years under His reign they will perish in the fire from heaven that will fall upon them when they rebel under Satan's leadership against the King, Revelation 20. The call of mercy "Today if you will hear His voice" rings out to generation after generation to dispensation after dispensation. Some hear and heed in every generation and age. Many won't. Have you heard? Have you listened? Have you given heed and received Christ as Saviour and Lord?

By Ron Canner, April 30, 2008