

***Joy to the World* Psalms 96-98**

Psalm 96

96:1-2 What is the content of the *new song*?

96:3 List some *marvelous deeds* that bring the LORD glory.

96:4-5 Who are the *gods* mentioned here?

96:6-10 What would make us worship the Lord with greater devotion, reverence, and exuberance?

96:11-13 What is nature celebrating? Why would it celebrate that?

Psalm 97

97:1 Why do you celebrate the fact that the LORD reigns?

97:2-6 Describe the feelings which these verses create.

97:7 What warning does this speak to us?

97:8-12 What does hating evil look like practically in our life?

97:8-12 Why do we look forward to the LORD's judgment?

Psalm 98

98:1 Why does it say that the LORD's right hand and holy arm have worked salvation *for him*?

98:2-3 What is the connection here between *Israel* and *the nations*?

98:4-6 What is your favorite instrument for praising the LORD?

98:7-9 How will all the LORD's judgment be right and fair?

98:7-9 Why would nature praise the LORD when he is coming to judge the earth?

Joy to the World was published by Englishman Isaac Watts in 1719.

Watts wrote the words to many other hymns such as:

- *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*
- *From All that Dwell below the Skies*
- *O God, Our Help in Ages Past.*

American Lowell Mason set *Joy to the World* to music in 1836. The tune resembles music from Handel's *Messiah*. Mason wrote the music to a number of other well-known hymns, including *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. Though *Joy to the World* has become a famous Christmas hymn, its subject is actually the second coming of Christ.

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room and heav'n and nature sing...*

*Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy...*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found...*

*He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love...*

What specific thoughts from Psalms 96-98 do you find in the hymn?

What additional thoughts from other Bible passages did Watts include in his paraphrase of Psalms 96-98?

Why do you think *Joy to the World* has become a famous hymn that is sung so much?

Psalm 96—Sing to the LORD a New Song

Call to Worship

¹ Sing to the LORD a new song.

Sing to the LORD, all the earth.

² Sing to the LORD. Praise his name.

Proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

³ Tell about his glory among the nations,
about his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

Praise Him Alone

⁴ For great is the LORD and worthy of great praise.

He is to be feared above all gods.

⁵ For all the gods of the peoples are “nothings,”
but the LORD made the heavens.

⁶ Splendor and majesty are before him.

Power and beauty are in his sanctuary.

⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, families of peoples,
Ascribe to the LORD glory and power.

⁸ Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name.

Bring a gift and come into his courtyards.

⁹ Bow down to the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.

Look away from his face, all the earth.

¹⁰ Say among the nations, “The LORD reigns.”

The world is firmly established.

It will not be moved.

He will judge the peoples with fairness.

Let Nature Praise Him

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice.

Let the earth celebrate.

Let the sea roar,
and all that fills it.

¹² Let the fields be overjoyed,
and everything that is in them.

Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy

¹³ before the LORD, for he comes,

for he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples in his faithfulness.

Psalm 97—The LORD Reigns. Throw Away Your Idols

Introduction

¹ The LORD reigns. Let the earth celebrate.
Let the many islands and coastlands rejoice.

God Will Judge

² Clouds and deep darkness surround him.
Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
³ Fire goes out in front of him.
It burns up his foes all around him.
⁴ His lightning lights up the world.
The earth sees and writhes in pain.
⁵ The mountains melt like wax
 in the presence of the LORD,
 in the presence of the Lord of all the earth.
⁶ The heavens proclaim his righteousness,
and all the peoples see his glory.

Warning Against Idols

⁷ All who serve idols are put to shame,
those who boast in “nothings.”
Bow to him, all you gods!

His People’s Response

⁸ Zion hears and rejoices,
and the daughters of Judah celebrate
 because of your judgments, O LORD.
⁹ For you, O LORD, are the Most High over all the earth.
You are raised up far above all gods.
¹⁰ Let those who love the LORD hate evil.
He guards the lives of his favored ones.
He delivers them from the hand of the wicked.
¹¹ Light rises for the righteous
and joy for the upright in heart.
¹² Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous,
and give thanks as you remember his holiness.

Psalm 98—Sing to the LORD a New Song

Heading

A psalm.

Invitation

¹ Sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things.
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

Let His People Sing

² The LORD has made his salvation known.
He has revealed his righteousness to the eyes of the nations.
³ He has remembered his mercy and his faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Let All People Sing

⁴ Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.
Break out in joyful song! Make music!
⁵ Make music to the LORD with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of music.
⁶ With trumpets and the sound of the ram's horn
shout for joy before the King, the LORD.

Let the Whole Earth Sing

⁷ Let the sea roar, and everything that fills it,
the world, and all who live in it.
⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands.
Let the mountains sing for joy together before the LORD,
⁹ for he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples with fairness.