

- 1- *O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth.*
- 2- *Sing unto the Lord, bless his name: shew forth his salvation from day to day.*
- 3- *O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.*
- 4- *Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth . . .” (Psalm 96)*

The “new song” is the New Covenant, the Advent of the Saviour Who has come, offering God’s salvation to all the earth. It is the end of the ethnic, local, regional gospel. The glory of the Lord is to be declared among all nations (vs. 3)

It is good for us to be reminded that the first thing to be apprehended, understood, and appreciated in the gospel is the **God** of the gospel. Verses 4-6 tell us something of this Great God Who is the Supreme Subject of the gospel. Now let us consider verses 7 through 10, which tell us our *duty* in the gospel.

If we heed the purveyors and promoters of today’s religious enterprises, we will be told that our duties in the gospel are to provide benefits to man, to improve his lot on earth and work for a better society. But our text tells us our entire duty is to God. It is true that in the exercise of these duties to God, that God’s elect people will be benefited, but these services must be rendered unto God, not men. All must be done for His glory.

We are, first of all, to *give* unto God. Give to God? We who are so poor and weak, give to Him Who is so rich and strong? The psalmist asks in 166:12, “*What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?*” The answer comes, “*I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.*” (vs. 13-14). By humbly receiving of the Lord those benefits we sorely need, by calling upon Him and His strength and power to do for us what we cannot do, we ascribe to Him in the presence of His people the power and glory due unto Him.

That is a gift which will cost us nothing but our pride and independence, no small price for the stiff-necked, haughty and rebellious. But we are also to bring an offering of our substance to the Lord. We do not saunter into the courts of this Great King empty-handed. If we love and adore Him, we will happily break our alabaster box of precious ointment for His Feet.

We come before the Lord to worship Him in the beauty of His holiness, to bow and tremble in awe of His presence. But our duty is not yet discharged in these public and private adorations; we do have a message to proclaim to men. The psalmist does not give us all the minor details that might be involved in this message; such details as God’s love, Christ’s birth, His teachings, His death and resurrection, His command to all men to repent. No, He goes right to the heart of the gospel, and with good reason, for most of the preaching today majors on these minor details, and omits the singular good news men are to hear: “*Say among the heathen that **THE LORD REIGNS.***” (vs. 10) That is the heart of the matter, and that is to be our ultimate message.

Verse 3 also tells us to “*Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.*” We have destroyed every entreaty, every declaration in the gospel, when we present a god who has put salvation in the sinners’ hands, and only offers to help them. No, if we are to have any good news, we must have a God Who reigns, Who in in charge, Who holds the power to save or to damn every single soul who lives. And Who will surely do it by His free sovereign grace or not at all. This is the God of the gospel Who has firmly established the heavens and the earth, and will without fail bring everything to righteous judgment. That is the great salvation for which all creation waits and groans.

If we are yet doubting this to be the sum and substance of the gospel, consider the Apostle’s summation of Romans 10:13: “*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*” To call, they must believe. To believe, they must hear. To hear, they must have a preacher. To preach, the preacher must be sent. Then he draws the final answer from Isaiah 52:7: “*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, the publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, **YOUR GOD REIGNS!***”

-C.M.