

Psalm 96

Christmas Midnight Mass
29th Sunday Year A; 2nd Sunday Year C
Office of Readings 31st December and Epiphany
Morning Prayer Monday Week 3

This is the fourth in a series of psalms to YHWH as king (93-99). The psalmist calls the heavens and the earth and all peoples to acclaim YHWH the Creator who is coming to judge the world. God's reign is universal, serene and secure.

Compare Psalm 33:3; 144:9; 149:1 and the following:

¹Sing to YHWH* a new song; sing to YHWH, all the earth.

See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them. Sing to YHWH a new song, his praise from the end of the earth! Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the coast lands and their inhabitants.

– Isaiah 42:9-10

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

– Isaiah 43:19

You have heard; now see all this; and will you not declare it? From this time forward I make you hear new things, hidden things that you have not known.

– Isaiah 48:6

I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation.

– Psalm 40:9

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!'

– Isaiah 40:9

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

– Isaiah 52:7

²Sing to YHWH, bless* his name; day after day proclaim his salvation*.

Praise YHWH

³Declare his glory* among the nations, his marvellous deeds among all the peoples.

⁴For great is YHWH, and greatly to be praised; to be revered above all the gods.

⁵Yes, the gods of the peoples are idols, but YHWH made the heavens.

⁶In his presence are honour and majesty, strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

⁷Acknowledge YHWH, O families of the peoples, acknowledge YHWH's glory and strength.

⁸Acknowledge the glory due to YHWH's name; bring an offering, and enter his courts.

⁹Worship the Lord in holy splendour; tremble before him, all the earth.

¹⁰Say among the nations, 'YHWH is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity.

¹¹Let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice, let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

¹²let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

¹³before YHWH;

for he is coming, he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge* the world with righteousness*, and the peoples with his truth.

Pagan gods are declared to be mere idols (see Isaiah 2:8,18,20; 31:7).

All the nations that you have made will come and bow down before you, O Lord, and glorify your name.

– Psalm 86:9 (see Psalm 102)

Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of YHWH, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.'

– Isaiah 2:3

Foreigners who join themselves to YHWH ... I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples

– Isaiah 56:6-7

All creation is being summoned to join in praising YHWH-King (see Psalm 148).

Sing, O heavens, for YHWH has done it; shout, O depths of the earth; break forth into singing, O mountains, O forest, and every tree in it!

– Isaiah 44:23

Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing!

– Isaiah 49:13

The mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

– Isaiah 55:12

On the coming of YHWH see the commentary on Psalm 98.

On the reign of God compare the following:

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you.

– 2Timothy 4:1

- the reign of God the Father

We give you thanks, Lord God Almighty, who are and who were, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.

– Revelation 11:17

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah ... Rejoice then, you heavens and those who dwell in them!

– Revelation 12:10,12

Hallelujah! For YHWH our God the Almighty reigns.

– Revelation 19:6

- the reign of Jesus the Son of God

God has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

– Acts 17:31

The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever.

– Revelation 11:15

He must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

– 1Corinthians 15:25

He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son.

– Colossians 1:13

- we are called to share in this reign.

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests serving our God, and they will reign on earth.

– Revelation 5:10

Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him a thousand years.

– Revelation 20:6

They will reign forever and ever.

– Revelation 22:5