

Singing a New Song

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Commit; Sanctification / Psalm 96:1–13

From the very beginning of Scripture, we see that God has always desired to walk closely with His people. Adam and Eve walked and talked with God in the Garden of Eden. Enoch walked with God, and was not; for God took him ([Genesis 5:24](#)). Abraham believed God, and was called the friend of God ([James 2:23](#)). The Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend ([Exodus 33:11](#)). Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple ([Isaiah 6:1](#)). David, though broken by sin, offered a contrite and broken heart ([Psalm 51:17](#)), and was called a man after God's own heart ([Acts 13:22](#)). Elijah heard God not in the wind, nor in the fire, but in a still small voice ([1 Kings 19:12](#)), and was later taken up into heaven in a whirlwind ([2 Kings 2:11](#)). Paul, once a persecutor of the church ([Acts 8:1–3](#)), was transformed by grace and caught up into the presence of God ([2 Corinthians 12:2–4](#)). And John, on the isle of Patmos, received the revelation of Jesus Christ ([Revelation 1:1, 9–10](#)). These were men who did not merely know about God—they walked with God, heard from God, and were changed by God.

And yet, when we look at our lives today, we must ask an honest question: So why does that kind of closeness seem so rare today? Has our generation become more sinful than those before us, or have we become distracted... comfortable... and quietly more in love with the world than with God? Scripture warns us, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" ([1 John 2:15](#)). Could it be that we have lost sight of the treasure hidden in the field, and the pearl of great price ([Matthew 13:44–46](#)), that what once stirred joy and surrender now competes with lesser things? Have we lost the hunger to seek God like Daniel, who prayed openly though it cost him everything ([Daniel 6:10](#))? Have we drifted from the still waters where He restores our soul ([Psalm 23:2–3](#))?

For the promise still stands: “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you” ([James 4:8](#)). Or is the issue even deeper? We have been born of the water and of the Spirit ([John 3:5](#)), yet too often we resist the Spirit’s leading. God’s ways are higher than our ways ([Isaiah 55:8–9](#)), yet we cling to our own. We are called to walk in the Spirit ([Galatians 5:16](#)), yet we settle for walking in the flesh. And when that happens, something is lost—the song grows quiet, the joy fades, and worship becomes routine. God has not moved—we have.

But when a heart is made right with God—when it is broken, surrendered, and brought near again—something beautiful happens: a new song begins to rise. Today, as we turn to [Psalm 96](#), we will discover that while sin may distance us from God, a humble and surrendered heart draws us back into His presence. Like David, when we come with a contrite and broken heart, we find that God has not moved away from us—we have moved away from Him. And even now, He is near, He is calling, He is ready to restore, and He is worthy of a new song.

Singing a New Song

Psalm 96:1–3 NIV

Sing to the LORD a new song;

sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, praise His name;

proclaim His salvation day after day.

Declare His glory among the nations,

His marvelous deeds among all peoples.

A new song rises from a heart overwhelmed by salvation. It is not something we manufacture—it is the natural response of a soul that truly understands what God has done. Yet one of the greatest threats to that kind of worship is a heart that has drifted into discontentment. The commandment, “You shall not covet” ([Exodus 20:17](#)), exposes how easily our desires turn away from God. Instead of rejoicing in His goodness, we begin to compare. We look at what others have—their wealth, their success, their influence, even their health—and quietly convince ourselves that if those things were ours, we would finally be satisfied. But Jesus directly confronts that lie when He says,

Matthew 6:19–20 NIV

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Everything this world offers fades... breaks... and disappears. And then He presses it even deeper: “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” ([Matthew 6:21](#)). What we value most will shape what we love—and what we love will ultimately shape what we worship.

When our hearts become attached to what is passing away, our worship begins to weaken. Gratitude fades. Joy diminishes. And our song grows quiet. But when we lift our eyes back to eternity, everything changes. Scripture reminds us that before the foundation of the world, God chose us—that He predestined us to be adopted as His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ ([Ephesians 1:4–5](#)). Think about that. Before we ever took a breath, before we ever lived a single day, God had already set His love upon us. We were created in His image ([Genesis 1:26–27](#)), fearfully and wonderfully made ([Psalm 139:14](#)), designed to reflect His glory. And yet, like David, we must come to the honest confession: “Against You, You only, have I sinned” ([Psalm 51:4](#)). Our thoughts, our words, and our actions reveal just how far we have drifted from the God we were created to honor.

And still—He chose us.

Still—He pursued us.

Still—He redeemed us.

Not because we were worthy... but because He is gracious.

That is the wonder of grace. Not that we sought Him, but that He sought us. Not that we were worthy, but that He made us worthy through Christ. A new song is born right there—in that realization. It is the song of a redeemed heart that no longer looks around in envy, but looks up in gratitude. It is the song of someone who understands that while this world is fading, their salvation is secure. And when that truth takes hold, praise is no longer forced—it overflows.

Declaring God's Supremacy

And when praise begins to overflow like that, it leads us to an even greater question—not just *that* we should worship... but *why God alone is worthy* of that worship.

Psalms 96 now lifts our eyes from our song... to the greatness of the One we are singing to.

Psalm 96:4-6 NIV

For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;

he is to be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the nations are idols,

but the LORD made the heavens.

Splendor and majesty are before Him;

strength and glory are in his sanctuary.

People we value, we tend to admire, and what we admire we begin to imitate. That is not wrong in itself—Paul even said, “Follow my example, as I follow Christ,” and we are called to encourage one another and build each other up in the faith. But we must never confuse the example with the object of our worship, because there is only One who is worthy of our highest praise. He alone is our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sustainer. There is no one like Him—holy, pure, unchanging, and working in us to conform us into the likeness of His Son.

And yet [Psalm 96](#) confronts us with a sobering truth: “*All the gods of the nations are idols*” (verse 5). The question is not if you worship—the question is who you worship. What you value most will shape your life. We often follow the voices we fear the most and the people we value the most, and when we fear man more than God, we will obey man over God. Behind those misplaced desires and competing loyalties lies a deeper spiritual battle—not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces seeking to draw our hearts away from God. But we do not need to live in fear, because the same God who is above all gods now lives within us. “*Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world*” ([1 John 4:4](#)). Through Him we stand firm, clothed in the full armor of God.

So, what does it mean to truly sing a new song? It is more than words on our lips—it is surrender in our hearts. It is turning away from the false gods of this world—approval, success, comfort, control—and declaring, “Christ alone is Lord of my life.” Think of a child standing before a large, barking dog—alone, they are afraid, but when their parent stands beside them, everything changes. In the same way, we face fears and battles, but we do not stand alone. Christ stands with us, and Christ dwells within us. And because of Him, we can face whatever comes—not with fear, but with confidence, strength, and unwavering faith.

Ascribing Glory to God

When we truly see God for who He is—high, holy, and above all—there is only one fitting response: we must give Him the glory He deserves.

Psalm 96:7–9 NIV

Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations,

ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;

bring an offering and come into his courts.

Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness;

tremble before him, all the earth.

When we truly see God for who He is—high and lifted up, holy beyond comparison, and sovereign over all—there is only one fitting response: we must ascribe to Him the glory He deserves. [Psalm 96](#) calls all people, in every nation, to recognize His greatness: to give Him glory and strength, to bring an offering, and to worship Him in the splendor of His holiness. This is not a casual acknowledgment—it is a call to reverence, to awe, to trembling before the One who rules over all the earth.

Yet we often find ourselves fearing lesser powers. We fear people, systems, and nations because they seem to control our security, our reputation, and even our future. We see wars rage across the world—cities reduced to rubble, families displaced, lives lost, and entire populations left searching for stability. Even from a distance, the effects ripple outward as economies shake and uncertainty grows. And though modern nations wield immense power—advanced weapons, global influence, even the capacity for devastating destruction—they are not

sovereign. Power does not belong to nations—it belongs to God. Scripture reminds us that there is no authority except that which God has established. Every throne, every ruler, every kingdom ultimately answers to Him. And the day is quickly approaching when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We see this truth vividly in the life of King Hezekiah. At just twenty-five years old, he began his reign by doing what was right in the eyes of the Lord. He tore down idols, destroyed the Asherah poles, and called the people back to true worship. He trusted in God so fully that Scripture says there was no king like him before or after. But his faith was tested when the mighty Assyrian empire advanced against Judah. This was not a small threat—Assyria was a dominant military force, conquering fortified cities with overwhelming strength and ruthless precision. Even after Hezekiah paid tribute, the Assyrian commander stood outside Jerusalem and mocked both the king and the people, challenging the very foundation of their faith. “Do not trust in the Lord,” he said. “He cannot deliver you.” He pointed to other nations whose gods had failed them and declared that Judah would be no different.

In that moment, Hezekiah faced a choice: bow to fear... or bow before God. And what you bow to... will determine how you stand. Instead of trusting in human strength or giving in to intimidation, he humbled himself. He tore his clothes, clothed himself in sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. He prayed—not with pride, but with dependence—and sought the voice of God through the prophet Isaiah. What followed was not human strategy—it was divine intervention. In a single night, the angel of the Lord struck down 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. The army that inspired fear... was silenced in a single night. Why? So that the glory would belong to God alone.

To sing a new song, then, is to live with this same understanding. It is to recognize that our lives, our breath, and our future are not held by the powers of this world, but firmly and sovereignly in the hands of God. It is to turn from fear of lesser things and instead stand in awe of the One who reigns over all. A new

song rises from a heart that sees clearly, trusts deeply, and gives God the glory He is due—for He alone is worthy, and He alone is Lord.

Proclaiming the Lord's Return

Psalm 96:10–13 NIV

Say among the nations, “The LORD reigns.”

The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;

he will judge the peoples with equity.

Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;

let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;

let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.

Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes,

he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness

and the peoples in his faithfulness.

[Psalm 96](#) calls us not only to worship, but to proclaim: “Say among the nations, ‘The Lord reigns.’” This is a declaration of ultimate authority in a world filled with competing voices. Every day, we are surrounded by influences that seek to

shape our lives—pressuring us through approval, fear, and the promise of success. The world subtly teaches that fulfillment is found in wealth, recognition, and personal freedom, so long as we do not interfere with others. It tells us to choose our own path, define our own truth, and pursue whatever brings us pleasure. Yet for the believer, this message stands in direct opposition to the gospel. To live a life worthy of Christ is to walk a narrow path, one that often leads to rejection rather than applause. Jesus Himself warned us: if we belonged to the world, it would love us—but because we belong to Him, we should expect resistance. True success is not measured by temporary gain—but by eternal faithfulness. The world measures success by comfort—God measures it by faithfulness. We are not running this race to accumulate influence or comfort, but to surrender fully to Christ as our Lord, Savior, and King.

As ambassadors of Christ, we are called to carry this message into a world that desperately needs it. We implore others to be reconciled to God, not as a suggestion—but as a plea of love and urgency. While many believe they can shape the future or control the course of this world, Scripture reminds us that “the world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.” God alone is sovereign. He raises up leaders and brings them down, and every authority ultimately answers to Him. The same Christ who offers salvation is also the One appointed to judge the living and the dead. He does not merely observe humanity—He discerns, He separates, He reveals what is real and what is empty. The winnowing fork is in His hand. Nothing is hidden—nothing is ignored. The God who formed us in the womb and knows our every thought will one day distinguish between those who belong to Him and those who have chosen to live for themselves.

And yet, as we look toward that coming day when Christ will return to judge the world in righteousness, our hearts are not only filled with anticipation—they are filled with urgency. Yes, justice will come, and every wrong will be made right, but that reality should also stir within us a deep compassion for those who are not yet ready. For over two thousand years, believers have looked toward heaven, awaiting His return. But the Lord is not slow in keeping His promise—He is patient, not wanting anyone to perish, but all to come to repentance. That

patience is not delay—it is mercy. And that mercy is our calling. For if we are honest, we too were once far from God, and it was His mercy that drew us near. How can we receive such grace—and not extend it?

So we sing a new song—not only as an expression of our salvation, but as a witness to the world. A song of hope, a song of truth, a song that declares that Christ reigns and that He is coming again. And we sing it with the prayer that those who are still wandering might hear it, turn to Him, and join in that song—so that together, all of creation might rejoice before the Lord, for He alone is worthy of all honor and glory.

Conclusion

From the beginning of Scripture to this very moment, God has been calling people into relationship with Himself—not distant, not casual, but close, transforming, life-changing fellowship. And the question before us today is not whether God is near—the question is whether we will draw near to Him. A new song is not reserved for a select few; it is the natural response of every heart that has truly seen the beauty of Christ, the weight of sin, and the wonder of grace. But that song will not rise from a divided heart. It rises when we turn from lesser things, when we lay down the idols of this world, and when we surrender fully to the One who alone is worthy. The Lord reigns. He is sovereign over every power, every nation, every circumstance—and one day, every knee will bow before Him. The same Christ who has saved us is the Christ who is coming again, not only to receive worship, but to judge in righteousness and truth. The Lord reigns—not someday, but right now.

So the call today is simple, but it is not easy: examine your heart. What are you truly living for? What has your affection, your obedience, your trust? Are you singing a new song, or has your song grown quiet under the weight of distraction and compromise? The Lord is not distant—He is near. He is patient. He is calling. And even now, He invites you to return, to surrender, and to walk

closely with Him once again. And as you do, your life itself will become that new song—a song of gratitude, a song of surrender, a song that declares to the world that Christ alone is Lord. So draw near, surrender fully, and let your life declare: the Lord reigns.

[1] Albert Barnes, *Notes on the Old Testament: Psalms* (London: Blackie & Son, 1870–1872), 40.

[2] John H Walton, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary (Old Testament): 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 182.

[3] James K. Hoffmeier, *The Archaeology of the Bible* (Lion Hudson, 2019), 124.

[4] Frank Charles Thompson and John Stephen Jauchen, eds., in *Thompson Chain Archaeological Supplement* (Indianapolis, IN: B.B. Kirkbride Bible Co., Inc., 1997), 2232–2233.

