

**SBC – August 10, 2025**  
**Psalm 76:1-12 (NKJV)**  
**“God’s Victorious Power”**

**To the Chief Musician. On Stringed Instruments. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.**

We have yet another Psalm attributed to Asaph. Asaph was a singer/musician/prophet in the time of David and Solomon (cf. 1 Chron. 15:17-19; 16:5-7; 2 Chron. 25:1; 29:30). However, some of the Psalms attributed to him may be actually have been written by a later Asaph or someone who was a descendant of Asaph who maintained this family line identity or something like this.

Psalms 73-83 are known as the “Psalms of Asaph” because his name appears in the superscription on all of them. All of his Psalms have to do with the judgment of God and the imprecatory Psalm of Psalm 83 stands out in this regard.

One reason some think this may have been a “later Asaph” is that many suspect the occasion for this Psalm 76 may have been the defeat of the Assyrians in 701 BC under the leadership of Sennacherib, as seen in 2 Kings 18-19 and Isaiah 36-37. Even the translators of the Septuagint (LXX) suggested this was the occasion. This, of course, happened about 300 years after the historical Asaph, who served in the time of David. However, the occasion is not specifically mentioned, so it is conjecture.

Whatever the exact occasion in the past, there are certainly eschatological overtones that will have special application in the end times.

This Psalm, addressed to the Chief Musician in reference to “Stringed Instruments” and “A Song,” shows it was intended to be used in worship.

**Slide # 1**

**Psalm 76**

**“God’s Victorious Power”**

- vv. 1-3 God’s Might Shown in Zion
- vv. 4-6 God’s Triumphant Victory
- vv. 7-10 God is to be Feared
- vv. 11-12 A Call to Worship

The first 3 verses are a celebration of God's defense of Jerusalem with the dramatic pause of Selah at the end of verse 3!

Verses 4-6 are a celebration of God's great victories over Israel's powerful enemies.

Verses 7-10 emphasize that the God of Israel is to be feared.

And the Psalm concludes with a call to Worship in verses 11-12.

### **1 In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel.**

The people of God appreciate Him for Who He is. They know Him and recognize His greatness. For God to be known He has to reveal Himself which He uniquely has done in relationship to Israel throughout their history.

Back in the OT God chose to reveal Himself through a covenant relationship with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants.

“In those days, if you wanted to know who God was and what he was like, you had to turn to the Jews and their Bible.”

**- James Montgomery Boice**

It was in the context of Judah and Israel that God was known! Want a great apologetic for the God of the Bible – study Israel! Israel has God's fingerprints all over it, right down to this very day.

For the Jews, the idea of a person's name reflects their identity, reputation, and character. The emphasis here in Psalm 76 is that God's people think HIGHLY of Him! They know, recognize, and value Him for the great God that He is and what He does for them.

### **2 In Salem also is His tabernacle, And His dwelling place in Zion.**

Salem was the ancient name for Jerusalem (cf. Gen. 14:18; Heb. 7:1-2). It was there that David brought the ark of the covenant and placed it in a tabernacle (cf. 2 Sam. 6).

The word Zion is found 154 times in the Old Testament and 7 times in the New Testament. It essentially means “fortification” and is essentially

synonymous with “city of God”. It is sometimes said to be the poetic name for Jerusalem.

In the Old Testament Zion represented the special dwelling place of God (cf. Ps. 9:11). In the millennial kingdom Mount Zion will represent the special dwelling place of God from where the Messiah will reign (cf. Isa. 24:23). In eternity the saints will be forever identified with Mount Zion and the eternal city of the living God (cf. Heb. 12:22-24).

The Bible defines Zion as God’s favorite place.

## **Slide # 2**

### **Psalm 87:2–3 (NKJV)**

**2** The LORD loves the gates of Zion More than all the dwellings of Jacob.

**3** Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! Selah

### **3 There He broke the arrows of the bow, The shield and sword of battle. Selah**

When David conquered the city of Jerusalem, in addition to Zion (meaning stronghold), it also became known as “the City of David” (2 Sam. 5:6-10). So Zion refers to the old city of Jerusalem, especially related to the Temple Mount, where God’s presence was uniquely experienced.

The city of Jerusalem meaning “City of God” or literally “City of Peace” has been the most conflicted city in the world.

Jerusalem has been besieged at least 23 times throughout its history. In addition to being besieged, the city has been destroyed twice, attacked 52 times, and captured and recaptured 44 times.

And yet even to this day the Jews are there. However, the author here evidently has some specific historical occasion in view. Many suspect this is spoken in reference to the Assyrian Invasion dealt with in 2 Kings and Isaiah.

As the powerful Assyria was on the outskirts of Jerusalem and the Assyrian general named Sennacherib was breathing out threats and blaspheming the God of Israel, Hezekiah, the king of Judah, prayed and sent for Isaiah the prophet. Isaiah had this message.

**Slide # 3****2 Kings 19:32 (NKJV)**

**32** “Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: ‘He shall not come into this city, Nor shoot an arrow there, Nor come before it with shield, Nor build a siege mound against it.

Here is the Assyrian army camped outside the gates of Jerusalem. This great army had swept everything before them. “They were feared and dreaded in the ancient world. Now God says through Isaiah that they will not besiege the city of Jerusalem and that they will not even shoot an arrow into the city! Now, you think that over for a moment. There are 185,000 soldiers around the walls of Jerusalem. Out of that number, you would certainly find some trigger-happy soldier with a bow and arrow who would shoot at least one arrow over the wall. ...God says that not an arrow is going to fall in that city...

- **J. Vernon McGee**

Well, what happened?

**Slide # 4****2 Kings 19:35 (NKJV)**

**35** And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead.

That has an uncanny way of preventing arrows from coming over the wall! It certainly is an example of God breaking the arrows of the enemy when it comes to Jerusalem.

Selah! Stop and soak this in!

**4 You are more glorious and excellent Than the mountains of prey.**

Asaph thought of the beauty and the bounty of the mountains of prey, the places remote and wild enough to be home to wild animals. He knew that the Lord God was more glorious and excellent than these beautiful places. – **David Guzik**

The Septuagint gives an alternative reading of **mountains of prey**. “*The everlasting mountains* is a reading borrowed from the

Septuagint, probably rightly, in place of the somewhat obscure 'mountains of prey' (King James Version, Revised Version)."

- **Derek Kidner**

Mountains in the Bible are often used as a symbol of strength so in effect this is saying that God's intervening power extols His awesome excellencies.

**5 The stouthearted were plundered; They have sunk into their sleep; And none of the mighty men have found the use of their hands.**

On this occasion, the stouthearted (that is, strong, stubborn, steeled, hardened men of war) were plundered and sank into their sleep, which probably refers to the sleep of death.

On this occasion, none of these mighty men were able to have their way with God's people because God put them down. Again, this certainly fits the Assyrian army of Sennacherib, but we can't be sure if that was the occasion.

**6 At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob, Both the chariot and horse were cast into a dead sleep.**

The Jews had a deep fear of military horses and chariots, which were considered advanced warfare machinery in those days. But they were no match for the God of Jacob. God put them down "into a dead sleep."

This would certainly have application to the event of the Exodus and the drowning of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea (Ex. 15:1-4, 16).

God's name is known in Israel, and they understand He is a God to be feared, which is the emphasis in verses 7-10. Don't mess with the God of Israel is the message!

**7 You, Yourself, are to be feared; And who may stand in Your presence When once You are angry?**

To fear God means to hold Him in awe and reverence. The old KJV used the word "terrible" to define God in places like Psalm 47:2. Fearing God signifies the overwhelming nature of God's person, inspiring a sense of reverential fear.

“You, Yourself” makes the double emphasis that the person of God is to be feared because of WHO He is as an awesome and holy God.

Our respect and reverence for God goes beyond admiration of His greatness. It is also connected to our knowledge of His righteousness, His power, and His authority as Judge. We understand that God is the best friend and the worst enemy.

- **David Guzik**

In context, the emphasis is that God’s ANGER is to be feared! This emphasis is made with a Selah (stop and meditate on this) at the end of verse 9.

**8 You caused judgment to be heard from heaven; The earth feared and was still,  
9 When God arose to judgment, To deliver all the oppressed of the earth. Selah**

Though God is present in Zion (on earth) He sovereignly rules from heaven. His judgment from heaven causes the earth to fear and be still.

When God directly intervenes in judgment, it paralyzes people. Have you ever seen anyone really scared? They are paralyzed to where they can’t move.

When God rises in judgment, people are stilled in their rebellion before His awesome power. It shakes and silences them to the core.

### **Slide # 5**

**Psalms 46:10 (NKJV)**

**10 Be still**, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

**Zephaniah 1:7 (NKJV)**

**7 Be silent** in the presence of the Lord GOD; For the day of the LORD is at hand, For the LORD has prepared a sacrifice; He has invited His guests.

**Zechariah 2:13 (NKJV)**

**13 Be silent**, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!”

God, in this case, is shown to arise in judgment on behalf of His people – to deliver all the oppressed of the earth.

This is what God is famous for in Israel. He is known as a delivering God! This defines their history with God starting with the Exodus!

Selah, one again we have a meditative pause. Reflect on this.

Reflect on how God has worked in the past (v. 3).

Reflect on the fact that God is a God to be feared in view of His anger (v. 9).

God's judgments accomplish at least three purposes: They bring glory to God as they reveal His justice and holiness; they punish the wicked for their evil deeds; and they bring salvation to those who trust the Lord (Ps. 72:4). – **Warren Wiersbe**

In the Bible God's people are often described as the "oppressed" which is often translated as "humbled". They are often in a lowly place, a position of being picked on and oppressed. They are vulnerable because they don't fight flesh with flesh. They are oppressed simply for aligning with God whom the world hates.

God allows them to be oppressed for a season, but judgment day is coming when the world will be stilled in their oppressive ways. It will all be stopped in its tracks. Selah!

And this leads to the conclusion of the matter.

**10 Surely the wrath of man shall praise You; With the remainder of wrath You shall gird Yourself.**

This is a most interesting verse and one often wrestled with in terms of the exact nuance. It shows how awesome God is and WHY He should be feared.

There are two parts to this verse. The first part is fairly clear, while the second part is more difficult.

When it says "the wrath of man shall praise You" the idea is that man's hostility against God results in praise to God. The more people fume against, resist, rebel and fight against God the more He uses it to ultimately bring glory to Himself.

An example of this is Pharaoh. In the prolonged drawn out affair of the 10 plagues God brought down on Egypt Pharaoh constantly REBELLED but in each case he was put down and in each case God used it to further His praises (cf. Rom. 9:17).

### **Slide # 6**

#### **Exodus 11:9 (NKJV)**

9 But the LORD said to Moses, “Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.”

Next to the Creation Account and the Flood Account in the OT perhaps the greatest demonstration of God’s power on display in the OT is seen in reference to what happened to Pharaoh. The more furious Pharaoh became the more it redounded to the glory of God.

When Sennacherib was spouting off about he was going to do to Hezekiah and Jerusalem God put him down by killing 185,000 of his men in one night and thus brought great glory to Himself. Indeed as Ps. 76:8 says, “**The earth feared and was still**”. That will put the fear in you and shut you up!

“Surely the wrath of man shall praise You”.

The way that God thwarts their wrathful schemes leads people to acknowledge God’s rule. – **ESV Study Bible**

The last part of Ps. 76:10 is a little more difficult to understand. When it says, “**With the remainder of wrath You shall gird Yourself**” what does that mean.

There are two main ideas that have been put forth as to how to understand this.

- 1) One view is that this should be understood as “**the remainder of wrath You shall restrain**”. If this is the nuance it means that after God puts down the wrath of man any further rebellion He keeps in check. Nothing that man further desires to do can move beyond what God has determined. In the case of Sennacherib he may have wanted to regroup and bring further wrath against Jerusalem but he was not allowed to do so. There are no “**come backs**” against God! Even if there is some fight left in the rebel it is restrained.



God's **wrath against** wicked **men** results in believers praising Him and deters those who are not destroyed from giving full vent to their sins.

– ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

- 2) The second and more predominant view is that "***You shall gird Yourself***" is a very literal translation and the sense is that of a conqueror putting on the ornaments of the spoils.

The sense here is that any further attempts at wrath are used by God to adorn Himself with the futility of the enemies hostility. One commentator says, "***God would gird it on as a sword, and would make use of it as a weapon for executing his own purposes.***"

God uses the wrath of man to bring praise to Himself and if they try again, He also uses this to bring praise to Himself. Thus, every vestige of the wrath of man God ultimately uses to bring praise to Himself. Man can never win this battle. The more people fight against God the more He uses it to bring praise to Himself.

Under Antichrist the whole world in wrath will muster together against God, but they will go down. "***Surely the wrath of man shall praise You.***" Then 1000 years later under the leadership of Satan the world will again muster itself against the city of Jerusalem and "***With the remainder of wrath***" ***God will gird Himself.***

At the height of his military career, Napoleon was asked if God was on the side of France. The world conqueror cynically replied: "***God is on the side with the heaviest artillery.***" Then came his Waterloo! Napoleon not only lost that battle but his empire as well. The broken military genius then humbly acknowledged: "***Man proposes; God disposes.***"

Surely, the wrath of man shall praise You!

Because of WHO God is (v. 7) He is to be feared – He is to be revered and worshiped for the God that He truly is.

**11 Make vows to the Lord your God, and pay them; Let all who are around Him bring presents to Him who ought to be feared.**

If God is this great then we should fulfill what we have promised Him. Vows made should be paid as a matter of fear and worship. We should honor God with gifts of worship simply because of Who He is. He is worthy of our best offerings.

“If such should have been the gratitude and devotion of Israelites, for a temporary deliverance from the fury of an earthly tyrant, how much higher ought that of Christians to rise, for eternal redemption from the great oppressor!” - **George Horne**

**12 He shall cut off the spirit of princes; He is awesome to the kings of the earth.**

The greatest powers on earth should recognize they are under the sovereign power of the great God of Israel. Princes here is the idea of rulers.

In their pride they will be cut off. They will be humbled. He will break their spirit.

**Psalms 90:10 (NKJV)**

**10** The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

Soon the spirit of the princes are humbled and God in the end shows Himself to be awesome to the highest ranking people on earth – that is to the kings of the earth!

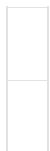
No one is excluded from the reverence and praise that is due to our great God!

“None are great in his hand. Caesars and Napoleons fall under his power as the boughs of the tree beneath the woodman’s axe.”

**-Charles Spurgeon**

"Make Me a Captive, Lord"  
George Matheson

*Make me a captive, Lord,  
And then I shall be free.  
Force me to render up my sword,  
And I shall conqueror be.*



Our only hope before the awesome God of Israel, the awesome God of the Bible is to be right with Him through faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior!

Truly He is a God to be feared (v. 7)

**Acts 10:35 (NKJV)**

**35** But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

Peter here is describing the reverent nature of a true saving faith!

He ultimately delivers the humbled of the earth, and is shown to be awesome before the kings of the earth.

**Slide # 7**

**Psalm 2:10–12 (NKJV)**

**10** Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth.

**11** Serve the LORD **with fear**, And rejoice with trembling.

**12** Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their **trust** in Him.

Indeed, blessed are all those who put their trust in Him!