

Psalm 96:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

Analysis

Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Continuing creation's chorus, this verse summons agricultural fields and forests to jubilation. "Let the field be joyful" (ya'alots sadai, יָעַלְתָּסַדַּי) uses alots (אַלְעַז), meaning to exult or rejoice triumphantly. Sadeh (שָׂדֵה, field) refers to cultivated land—humanity's provision through agriculture joins the cosmic praise.

"And all that is therein" (vekhol-asher-bo, וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ includes crops, livestock, and wild creatures inhabiting fields. Nothing is excluded from worship. "Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice" (az yerannenu kol-atsei ya'ar, אֵז יְרַנֵּנוּ כָל-עֲצֵי-עֵץ) uses ranan (רָנָן), meaning to shout for joy, sing, or cry out—exuberant celebration. The trees' rejoicing anticipates Isaiah 55:12: "the trees of the field shall clap their hands."

This vision corrects modern materialism that treats nature as mere resource for exploitation. Creation isn't dead matter but God's living workmanship, designed to glorify Him. Believers are called to creation care, not because nature is divine (pantheism) but because it belongs to and praises our Creator. When Christ returns to judge the earth (v. 13), He will restore creation to its original purpose: reflecting God's glory.

Historical Context

Ancient agrarian societies depended intimately on fields and forests for survival. Bountiful harvests meant life; drought or blight meant death. Pagan religions worshiped fertility gods and nature spirits, believing proper rituals ensured agricultural success. Israel's faith was revolutionary: Yahweh alone controls weather, crops, and harvests—not Baal, Asherah, or nature spirits. Fields and trees don't have inherent divinity but exist to glorify their Creator. When Israel obeyed God's covenant, the land produced abundantly (Deuteronomy 28:1-14); disobedience brought agricultural curse (Deuteronomy 28:15-68).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this verse challenge both nature-worship (pantheism) and nature-exploitation (materialism)?
2. What does it mean practically for fields, crops, and trees to 'praise God,' and how should this shape agricultural practices?
3. How does Christ's redemption extend beyond humans to restore all creation, and what implications does this have for believers' environmental responsibility?

Interlinear Text

כֹּל יְבָנֶת אָז בְּבָנֶת יְאָשָׁר יְכָל שְׁלִיל יְעַל זָהָב

be joyful Let the field

H5937

H7704

H3605

H834

H0

H227

rejoice

H3605

H7442

עַץ

יעַר:

and all that is therein then shall all the trees of the wood

H6086

H3293

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 35:1 (Parallel theme): The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

Isaiah 44:23 (Parallel theme): Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

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