

Psalm 98

A Psalm.

Psalm 98:

The coming reign of the Lord on the earth is here celebrated as an event of great joy.

Therefore, three groups are called upon to rejoice: God's people (verses 1-3), the whole earth (verses 4-6), and all of nature (verses 7-9).

Verses 1-9:

Like the surrounding psalms, this psalm proclaims the excitement and joy of the whole earth because of the rule of the Lord in the kingdom.

This psalm is given over entirely to praise, with only a brief mention of the wicked.

- I. Celebration of the Lord's Victorious Reign (98:1-6).
 - A. Triumphs of the Lord (98:1-3);
 - B. Praise to the Lord (98:4-6).
- II. Exaltation of the Lord's Righteous Judgments (98:7-9).

Verses 1-3:

A song of praise for redeeming love is a new song, a mystery hidden from ages and generations.

Converts sing a new song, very different from what they had sung.

If the grace of God put a new heart into our breasts, it will put a new song into our mouths.

Let this new song be sung to the praise of God, in consideration of the wonders he has wrought.

The Redeemer has overcome all difficulties in the way of our redemption, and was not discouraged by the services or sufferings appointed him.

Let us praise him for the discoveries made to the world of the work of redemption; his salvation and his righteousness fulfilling the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament.

In pursuance of this design, God raised up his Son Jesus to be not only a Light to lighten the Gentiles, but the glory of his people Israel.

Surely it behooves us to inquire whether his holy arm hath gotten the victory in our hearts, over the power of Satan, unbelief, and sin.

If this be our happy case, we shall exchange all light songs of vanity for songs of joy and thanksgiving; our lives will celebrate the Redeemer's praise.

Psalm 98:1 "O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory."

"A new song":

See note on Palm 96:1.

"Right hand ... holy arm":

These are symbols of power.

"The victory":

The Lord is often pictured in the Old Testament as a divine warrior (Exodus 15:2-3; Psalms 18; 68:1-8; Isa. 59:15).

According to the prophets, Christ will begin His millennial reign following His victory over the nations of the world which will gather against Israel in the end times (compare Zech. 14:1-15; Rev. 19:11-21).

Jesus is the Right Hand of God.

He is also, the Holy Arm.

This Psalm is possibly, a praise of the One who set up His holy kingdom with such awe in the last Psalm.

Now we are looking at the personage of the Holy One who is the LORD.

We know that Jesus won the victory over Satan on the cross at Calvary.

Sin was defeated on the cross, and death was defeated when Jesus rose from the grave.

The victory of both were actually won on the cross.

When Jesus said, it is finished, all of His work was done.

The rising from the grave just gave a visual example that death could not hold Him nor of any of His followers.

There is much to sing for.

This setting up of His kingdom means joy unspeakable for His followers.

We really should be singing and joyful now because the victory is already won.

All of the great and wonderful preparations He has made for His followers, speak of His marvelous workings.

Psalm 98:2 "The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen."

Which was appointed him, he undertook, came to perform, and has caused to happen.

This, though wrought out, is unknown to men, especially to the Gentile world, who had no prophecy, promise, or revelation of the Messiah, and salvation by him.

But now this is made known in the everlasting Gospel, called therefore the Gospel of salvation, and by the ministers of it.

And, besides this, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and his salvation, is given to some.

Whereby they come to know their need of it, the suitableness of it to their case, the necessity of going to Christ for it, and their special and particular interest in it.

And such have a new song put into their mouths, and are under great obligation to sing it.

"His righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the Heathen":

Either the faithfulness of God in fulfilling his promises, particularly in raising up the Savior Jesus Christ.

Or the goodness of God to his people, and the strictness of his justice on their surety.

Goodness towards them, and severity on him, when he spared them and not him.

Turned his hand of grace and mercy on them, when he awoke the sword of justice against him.

Or of his own righteousness, which he had fulfilled the law in the room and stead of his people.

And which being brought in is revealed in the gospel, from faith to faith; and that "openly", not in dark shadows, types, and figures.

But it is to be seen with open face in the clear glass of the Gospel.

And is held up and forth in the ministration of it unto the Gentiles, whom God justifies through faith in it, as well as the believing Jews (see Rom. 3:30; see notes on Palms 57:9; 67:3; 82:8).

When Jesus came and opened the way for the Gentiles to be saved along with the Jews, it was a new day.

Salvation is a free gift from God to man.

Man (of his own efforts), could never have been saved.

God saw the frailty of man and made a way for us to be saved.

The salvation through belief in Jesus Christ was offered to all (whosoever will).

The righteousness of Christ that we take upon our being, is also a free gift.

We give Jesus our sin upon His body, and He gives us His righteousness to be clothed in.

Praise God! What a wonderful trade.

Psalm 98:3 "He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

“His mercy and his truth”:

See notes on Psalms 85:7 and 89:5.

“Salvation”:

These words are a metaphor for the Lord’s establishment of His righteous kingdom on earth (compare Isa. 46:13; 51:5-8).

Not just Israel, but every nation of the world, can partake of the salvation that Jesus offered us.

Revelation 5:9 "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;"

Jesus came first to the house of Israel.

He preached, healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, delivered them from evil spirits, and even gave His flesh on the cross for them.

Romans 11:25 "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

God is not finished, He will remove the scales from their eyes, and they will believe.

Some from all nations will be saved, even Israel.

Verses 4-9:

Let all the children of men rejoice in the setting up the kingdom of Jesus Christ, for all may benefit by it.

The different orders of rational creatures in the universe, seem to be described in figurative language in the reign of the great Messiah.

The kingdom of Christ will be a blessing to the whole creation.

We expect his second coming to begin his glorious reign.

Then shall heaven and earth rejoice, and the joy of the redeemed shall be full.

But sin and its dreadful effects will not be utterly done away, till the Lord comes to judge the world in righteousness.

Seeing then that we look for such things, let us give diligence that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

Psalm 98:4 "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise."

"Make a joyful noise":

A great cheer, greeting and welcoming a king (compare Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:4-9).

"Loud noise":

The idea is that of an eruption of praise which could not be contained (compare Isaiah 14:7; 44:23; 55:12).

We must not sing half-hearted praises to our God.

We should sing with everything within us.

Great honor and praise must go to the Lord of all the earth, when He takes over to reign.

We get excited about other things, why not get the most excited with the One who purchased your eternal life for you?

It would not even be out of line to shout a little with your rejoicing.

What a glad day that will be, when we see Jesus.

I get excited now just talking about it.

It seems to me that mankind better expresses himself in song than any other way.

Music sets the pace for what is in your heart.

Verses 5-6:

Harp ... trumpets ... cornet”:

Instruments normally used in temple worship (compare 1 Chron. 16:5-6; 2 Chron. 5:12-13; 29:25-30; Ezra 3:10-13).

Psalm 98:5 "Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm."

Playing upon that at the same time.

Here and in the following verse is an allusion to Old Testament worship, and the manner of performing that.

Not that this should be done in New Testament times, only New Testament worship is expressed in Old Testament language, which is no unusual thing.

Hence in Gospel times, and Gospel churches, the saints, especially when singing the new song of redeeming grace, are said to have harps in their hands, expressive only of their spiritual melody in their hearts (Rev. 5:8).

"With the harp, and the voice of the psalm":

With the harp alone first, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret it, and then with the harp, and together with the words of a psalm, sung in a psalm tune.

Gospel churches are to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19).

Some believe that musical instruments should not be used to worship God, but I believe that is what musical instruments were made for.

Psalm 98:6 "With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King."

The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, render it with ductile trumpets, such as were made of silver.

As the two trumpets for the calling of the assembly (Num. 10:2).

To which the allusion seems to be here, called "asosra" by Josephus according to the Hebrew language which he says were in length a little less than a cubit, but the pipe narrow, somewhat thicker than a flute, having a sufficient breadth at the mouth to blow with, ending after the manner of a bell.

The cornet was a trumpet or pipe, made of horn, from whence it has its name.

Such were those, made of rams' horns, the priests blew with when they encompassed Jericho (Joshua 6:4).

"Make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King":

Or rather "before the King, the LORD".

Before the King, who is Jehovah, who is the King of kings, and LORD of lords.

Let this shout be made before him, in his presence, and on account of his kingly office, and because of some eminent appearance of his kingdom and glory (see Rev. 19:6).

We should proclaim joy throughout the land on the trumpet, and the coronet.

There should be mighty playing of the trumpet to proclaim our Lord King.

There should be such power in our praise and worship with song and instrument that it would be heard in heaven itself.

Verses 7-8:

The psalmist personifies aspects of nature to emphasize that the whole earth rejoices at the coming of the righteous King and Judge.

In Canaanite religion, "the sea" was a dark deity, portrayed here as very much under God's control and glad at His coming (Isa. 42:10).

Psalm 98:7 "Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."

See the notes at (Psalm 96:11), where the same phrase occurs.

The call on the inanimate things of nature to rejoice is grounded on man's sympathy with nature, which makes him desire, and half believe, that nature may sympathize with him.

The world, and they that dwell therein (compare Psalm 24:1).

"The world, and they that dwell therein":

The habitable world, the land in distinction from the sea.

Let there be universal praise on the water and the land.

The sea many times, means the masses of people.

I believe even the physical sea will rejoice.

The waters had been turning to wormwood, and I believe the sea will be restored to freshness at this time.

Why would it not rejoice with all the world.

Let everything that hath breath, praise the Lord of all.

This will not be just mankind but all of God's creation will rejoice.

Psalm 98:8 "Let the floods clap [their] hands: let the hills be joyful together"

"Floods clap their hands":

Different parts of nature are pictured as rejoicing in this universal scene of joy (compare Isa. 35:1-2; Rom. 8:19-21).

God has promised never to destroy the whole world with a flood again.

We know that even the rocks would have shouted out praises, if David had not danced and praised God before the ark of the Covenant.

Why could not a mountain praise God, as well?

There will be no more battles where the blood runs in the mountains.

There is peace on all the earth.

The King of Peace reigns.

Psalm 98:9 "Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity."

"He cometh":

See note on Psalm 96:13.

"With righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity": Both at his first and second coming, and during the intermediate time.

The only difference is, that (in Psalm 96:13), it is said that he shall judge the people, and that is "with his truth".

Here "with equity", or "righteousness"; in the most upright manner, according to the strictest rules of justice and judgment (see Isa. 11:3).

All of this rejoicing has been before the LORD of all the earth.

The angels proclaimed His coming to the shepherds in the field when He came as a baby and lying in a manger.

Now this is to announce His coming as King, so trumpets must blow and voices must praise, and knees must bow to the King of all the earth.

There will be no unequal judgement from Him.

His judgement will be righteous.

There will be no special favors to the rich and those in high office.

All will be judged with the same set of rules.

His judgement is true and fair and forgiving.

The believers in Christ who stand before Him will be judged by the righteousness they are clothed with.

Those who refused Him as their Savior will be judged by the law of God.

Our cry should be Hallelujah to our King.

Psalm 98 Questions

1. Why are we to sing unto the Lord a new song?
2. What has gotten Him the victory?
3. Who is the Holy Arm?
4. When did Jesus win the victory over Satan?

5. Why should we already be singing joyful songs to the Lord?
6. His righteousness had been openly shown before whom?
7. Salvation is a free gift from _____ to _____.
8. Who was salvation offered to?
9. What was the wonderful trade that Jesus made with us?
10. Who was the salvation message first brought to?
11. Who is to make a joyful noise unto the Lord?
12. How does He want us to sing to Him?
13. How does mankind better express himself than any other way?
14. Verse 5 says to use what kind of instrument?
15. What does the author think that musical instruments were made for?
16. What two instruments are specifically mentioned in verse 6?
17. There should be such power in our praise and worship that it could be heard where?
18. What does the sea have to rejoice about?
19. What does the sea symbolize many times?
20. Let everything that hath _____, praise the Lord.
21. God has promised never to destroy the world again by a _____.
22. What would have praised God, if David had not?
23. How will He judge the earth?
24. Will some be shown special favor?
25. What will He judge those who rejected salvation with?