

Psalm 98 – MSS  
Yahweh's Salvation and Judgment

**A Psalm**

**Oh sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things!**

**His right hand and his holy arm  
have worked salvation for him.**

**<sup>2</sup>The LORD has made known his salvation;  
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

**<sup>3</sup>He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness  
to the house of Israel.**

**All the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.**

**<sup>4</sup>Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**

**<sup>5</sup>Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the sound of melody!**

**<sup>6</sup>With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!**

**<sup>7</sup>Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who dwell in it!**

**<sup>8</sup>Let the rivers clap their hands;  
let the hills sing for joy together**

**<sup>9</sup>before the LORD, for he comes  
to judge the earth.**

**He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with equity.**

Psalm 98 is among those eight Psalms, #'s 93-100, that celebrate Yahweh's kingship and calls for the nations and peoples of the earth to join in his worship.

This psalm has a one word heading or title, "A Psalm." A psalm in the Hebrew scriptures was a poem addressed to God, to be accompanied by singing and instrumental music.

The worship of almighty God with song and music is not small matter in the Hebrew scriptures; it is a prescribed way that he should be worshipped. Nor is this way of worshipping God is not lost in the New Testament worship of the church, for we are told in at least two places in the epistles to sing unto the Lord with psalms.

As many of you know, whenever we see in the English Bible the word "LORD" in all capital letters, it is a translation of the Hebrew personal name of God which is "Yahweh." So I will be using God's personal name "Yahweh" in place of LORD in this sermon.

Whenever I am preparing to preach from a text of scripture I search for what I think is the main idea of the passage. Here's the way I would state the main idea of this Psalm:

**Yahweh merits exuberant praise for his works of salvation and his coming judgment.**

**I want you to notice several things about this main idea statement.**

- a) I am using God's personal name, Yahweh.
- b) I use the word "merit" to describe why Yahweh should be praised. He merits praise, he deserves praise, he has earned the right and reason to be praised by his creatures.  
He has done things that no human could do or even imagine doing.
- c) He is to be praised for two principal reasons: his works of salvation and his coming judgment. Notice I say "works" of salvation – plural – for he has done many things in history to save his people in various ways.  
So he is to be praised not only for saving his people, but he is to be praised for the future judgment he will mete out on sinners, on those who reject his rule. So we might say there is a positive and negative reason to praise him.
- d) The praise we give should not be half-hearted or nonchalant or lazy but "exuberant." What does the word "exuberant" mean? Here are some definitions: Uninhibitedly enthusiastic; lavishly abundant, abounding in vitality, extremely joyful and vigorous.

Here's the main idea again: **Yahweh merits exuberant praise for his works of salvation and his coming judgment.**

Now there are three major sections in this Psalm, each one is three verses long:

**I. Yahweh's works of salvation call for a new song of praise. – v. 1-3**

**II. Yahweh's Kingship calls for exuberant worship. – v. 4-6**

**III. Yahweh's coming judgment calls for rejoicing. – v.7-9**

So let's take the first major idea:

**I. Yahweh's works of salvation call for a new song of praise. – v. 1-3**

***Oh sing to the LORD a new song,  
for he has done marvelous things!***

***A. He has done Marvelous things***

There is an important word here, a small word which we may miss that is very important; it is the word "for." It really means "because," or "for the reason that." We

should sing a new song to Yahweh because “he has done marvelous things, “ for the reason that he has done marvelous things.” Notice that the word “things” here is in the plural. He has done more than one marvelous thing.

*Can you think of a marvelous thing or two that God has done?*

Think of his works of Creation – he spoke the universe into being by the command of his speech, his word. To create a universe by his spoken word when just a moment previous there was no universe is an awesome act of power. You and I cannot create anything. All we can do is use the matter in God’s creation to make and form other things. We take iron ore and make utensils of iron. We take corn and make cornbread.

*What other marvelous acts has God done?*

*The very fact that you are breathing now is a result of how God has constructed the human body. Your heart keeps beating and the blood keeps flowing through your veins even though you are not trying to do these things. God had programmed your body to do these things automatically.*

Think what else God has done: he keeps the sun traveling in its yearly path around the Sun and the moon traveling it’s monthly path around planet earth. And besides this he is performing billions and trillions of operations going on simultaneously around the earth and around the universe.

He is also guiding each of our lives by his sovereign providence. It is no accident that you and I live in Dallas, Texas in the year 2023 and that we know one another and that we serve and worship in this local church.

God is continually doing marvelous things in us and around us all the time.

But on another level Yahweh is working his works of salvation.

Think of what he has done in **the salvation** of his people through out biblical history.

In verse 1 we read:

**His right hand and his holy arm  
have worked salvation for him.**

So we see this important word “salvation” stated for the first time in this psalm. Notice that the word “salvation” is used in each of the first three verses:

Besides at the end of verse 1, we see in verse 2, **<sup>2</sup>The LORD has made known his salvation..**

And in the last sentence in verse three we read: **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

What see in these first 3 verses is that Yahweh God is in the salvation business, he is active in saving his people from various dangers that may come their way.

For example, in the book of Genesis we read how he saved Jacob and his sons from starvation by sending them to Egypt where there was abundant food.

Then 400 years later when circumstances changed, he delivered them from oppressive slavery under a different Pharaoh in Egypt. This was something he had never done before. He prophesied before it happened that it would happen and when it happened, God led his people to escape Pharaoh's army by opening up the Red Sea so they could walk through the seabed as on dry ground.

This was an act of salvation. Yahweh is the saving God of his people. He had never done this before. The Hebrew people had never been chased by Pharaoh and his army and had never been saved from destruction by having a sea open up and allow them to pass through on dry ground.

When they got to the opposite shore, we read in Exodus 15:1ff

**15** Then Moses and the people of Israel <sup>(A)</sup>sang this song to the LORD, saying,

<sup>(B)</sup>"I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;  
the horse and his rider<sup>[a]</sup> he has thrown into the sea.

<sup>2</sup><sup>(C)</sup>The LORD is my strength and my <sup>(D)</sup>song,  
and he has become <sup>(E)</sup>my salvation;

this is my God, and I will praise him,  
<sup>(E)</sup>my father's God, and <sup>(G)</sup>I will exalt him.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD is <sup>(H)</sup>a man of war;  
<sup>(I)</sup>the LORD is his name.

Whenever Yahweh does something great for his people that he'd never done before, the old songs, as good as they are, aren't capable of including the new reasons to praise God, the new deliverances, the unique ways he undertakes to save and rescue his people. So Moses and his people sang this new song here in Exodus 15 as they looked back and saw the way God had miraculously rescued them.

I want you to notice what the second sentence of verse one says:

**His right hand and his holy arm  
have worked salvation for him.**

The "right hand" of Yahweh is an expression used to reveal his power in behalf of his people. For example, Isa. 41:10:

...fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my **righteous right hand**.

**The phrase his holy arm is used in similar way:**

..The LORD has bared his **holy arm** before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

The picture we see here, God intervening in the affairs of his people with his right hand and holy arm, show us that God does not stand afar off and aloof from the distresses of his people – but he comes down and personally intervenes in their affairs.

The difference can be seen in a man whose wife has died and they have an infant child. So the father does not just hire a nursemaid to come in and continuously care for the baby, but he cares for the baby himself, changing his diapers and all else necessary for his care. He intervenes personally in the life of his child.

The greatest example we have in the Bible is what God did in entering our human situation by sending his Son to take on himself our complete human nature, yet without sin, and live among us as a fellow human being. No one can now accuse God of being aloof and unfamiliar with the difficulties and temptations of being a human living among other sinful humans.

God, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, rolled up the sleeve of his robe and worked as a carpenter cutting down trees, sawing the wood, fashioning it to make lumber for houses and furniture, sweating in the summer and having numbed hands in the winter.

When God entered our human situation, it was something that had never happened before. As Paul tells us in Col. 1:26,

..” the **mystery** [of the incarnation of the Son of God was} hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints...” when Jesus took on flesh. Jesus’ mother, the virgin Mary, realized something of the “marvelous thing” this was when she herself began to declare,

My soul magnifies the Lord,

<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup> for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

<sup>49</sup> for he who is mighty has done great things for me,

and holy is his name.

<sup>50</sup> And his mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; Luke 1:46-51

Because the Son of God came from heaven to rescue his people from sin, death, and ignorance, new songs of praise have been breaking out ever since. It is thought by many bible scholars that there are a couple of early church hymns that Paul adapted and put in the scriptures, such as Phil. 2:6 -11, where we read of Jesus Christ:

<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,<sup>[b]</sup> being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. <sup>9</sup> Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the

name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**<sup>2</sup> The LORD has made known his salvation;  
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.**

When I was thinking about this text, I was wondering how Yahweh's righteousness could be revealed to the nations in the days of the Old Testament, hundreds of years before Jesus came and gave the Great Commission to his disciples to go out into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

But then he explained to me that when Yahweh delivered his people from Egypt, news of this deliverance of the Hebrews and the destruction of Pharaoh and his army went out into all the surrounding nations of the middle east. It was actually on a deeper level, a battle between the God of the Hebrews, Yahweh, and the pagan gods of the Egyptians. But the nations, the people groups in that part of the world, heard about this and were terrified. For example: we read about Rahab and her encounter with the three Hebrew spies in her town of Jericho:

Josh. 2:8-11 “<sup>8</sup> Before the men<sup>[B]</sup> lay down, she came up to them on the roof<sup>9</sup> and said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, <sup>(E)</sup>and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land <sup>(F)</sup>melt away before you. <sup>10</sup> For we have heard how the LORD <sup>(G)</sup>dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and <sup>(H)</sup>what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to <sup>(I)</sup>Sihon and Og, whom you devoted to destruction.<sup>[C]</sup> <sup>11</sup> And <sup>(J)</sup>as soon as we heard it, <sup>(K)</sup>**our hearts melted**, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for <sup>(L)</sup>the LORD your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath.”

So Yahweh's righteous act in delivering his people was made known to all the nations that were known by them at that time. Perhaps they weren't aware of China and Japan and the American continents.

Look at verse 3: **<sup>3</sup> He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.**

This is *covenant language* – that is, some of God's key attributes and how he related to his people. We read in Psalm 40:11:

As for you, O LORD, you will not restrain your mercy from me;  
your **steadfast love** and your **faithfulness** will ever preserve me!

Here is perhaps the greatest of Yahweh's marvelous acts – his own actions toward them over the centuries which always flowed out of his steadfast love and faithfulness to the Hebrew nation. Even when they rebelled and sinned against him, he remained faithful to his own nature and had to bring punishment and judgment on them for their sins.

The second sentence in verse 3, **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God**, again can be seen in the fact that all the nations that the Hebrews were aware of had seen Yahweh's act of salvation in delivering his people from Egypt through the Red Sea.

This great act of deliverance and salvation ever remained etched on the conscience as they were reminded year after year in the Passover celebration of this great act of salvation for them by Yahweh. Of course, there came a time later when they were disobedient to the Law and neglectful of it and did not keep the yearly Passover celebration and thus were not reminded of Yahweh's salvation in their behalf. After 400. Years of neglect King Josiah brought it back into practice.

This second sentence in verse three again states, **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

I think this verse can be seen in a similar way as Habakkuk 2:14:

***For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.***

It is true that God's glory can be seen everywhere all over the earth in his creation but there is coming a day when the supreme glory of God, that which is seen in his Son and his redemptive work, will be seen all over the earth.

It is a Day coming, a Day in which all the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament regarding coming judgment on sin and the coming salvation and restoration of his people will happen. It is a Day when the gospel will be preached to all nations, all people groups. It is a Day when people from every nations, tribe and tongue will hear of the Lord Jesus Christ and come to him in repentance and faith.

So the ultimate fulfillment of verse 3b, **All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God**, will take place, I believe, when the preaching of the Gospel has reached every people group, every ethnic group and will be most fully completed, when Jesus returns to bring in his everlasting kingdom and gather to himself all his people from east and west, and north and south.

So what we have seen in this first section of Psalm 98 is that...

#### **I. Yahweh's works of salvation call for a new song of praise.**

In the second section, verses 4-6, we see that ...

#### **II. Yahweh's Kingship calls for exuberant worship.**

Verse 4 says, <sup>4</sup>**Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**

In celebration of all of Yahweh's acts of salvation, the Hebrew people were to lift up their praises to him in exuberant worship. They were to make joyful noise unto him. They were to shout and praise him. They were to "break forth" into joyous song and sing praises. They were to break forth as a mighty concrete dam, like the Hoover Dam across the Colorado River between Nevada and Arizona might suddenly bust open and all the thousands of tons of water behind it pour forth and flood everything downstream, sweeping everything away in its path. So their praises were to break forth.

And so all restraint and inhibitions and timidity in our own minds should be cast aside and we should pour forth the praises of God. Let them loose; be not ashamed to praise God, for he is worthy. King David was unashamed to dance before the Lord with all his might when the ark of the covenant was brought into Jerusalem. He was an exuberant worshipper of God personally and he made provision for the worship of God in the temple by appointed choirs and musicians to sing and make melody to Yahweh. He spared no effort or expense in the hearty yet skillful worship of God. *The greatness of God calls for the greatest worship we can give him.*

Verses 5-6 state: <sup>5</sup> **Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,  
with the lyre and the sound of melody!**  
<sup>6</sup> **With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!**

So the writer of this Psalm is exhorting the people of God to not just limit their praises of Yahweh to their human voice but to enhance, to fortify, their worship with musical instruments – with lyres or harps, with trumpets and horns. Think how much our own singing is enhanced when Larry plays the piano.

And all this worship is directed toward Yahweh as King. What a great King he is: almighty to create and sustain the universe and our individual lives, perfect in all his attributes of steadfast love and faithfulness and righteousness. What a privilege it is to serve under his kingship. There is no other king, no other God, that can measure up to the perfection of his being, his person, his attributes. *The greatness of Yahweh calls for the greatest worship we can give him.*

So we see in Psalm 98:

- I. **Yahweh's works of salvation call for a new song of praise. – v. 1-3**
- II. **Yahweh's Kingship calls for exuberant worship. – v. 4-6**

And now, in the last section, we see that..

- III. **Yahweh's coming judgment calls for rejoicing. – v.7-9**

- <sup>7</sup> **Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;  
the world and those who dwell in it!**
- <sup>8</sup> **Let the rivers clap their hands;  
let the hills sing for joy together**
- <sup>9</sup> **before the LORD, for he comes**



**to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world with righteousness,  
and the peoples with equity.**

We see here this amazing revelation, that not just people, but all creation itself is to break forth in exuberant worship of Yahweh. This is how great he is, and how the whole created order, both animate and inanimate, are to express exuberant praise to him. We read in Romans 8:21-22:

“... the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.”

The question may be asked, are the exuberant praises of verses 4-6 to be poured forth to Yahweh for his acts of salvation put forth in verses 1-3, or for his act of coming judgment in verses 7-9? I think the answer is both: we are to pour forth exuberant worship to him both for his acts of salvation and his coming judgment on sin and evil.

His coming Judgment will be manifested when Christ returns. We read Christ’s own words in Matt. 25:31-46:

<sup>31</sup> <sup>(A)</sup> **“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, <sup>(B)</sup> then he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> Before him <sup>(C)</sup> will be gathered <sup>(D)</sup> all the nations, and <sup>(E)</sup> he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates <sup>(F)</sup> the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then <sup>(G)</sup> the King will say to <sup>(H)</sup> those on his right, ‘Come, you <sup>(I)</sup> who are blessed by my Father, <sup>(J)</sup> inherit <sup>(K)</sup> the kingdom <sup>(L)</sup> prepared for you <sup>(M)</sup> from the foundation of the world....**  
...<sup>41</sup> **“Then he will say to those on his left, [the ones who lived selfishly with no regard for the needs of the less privileged] <sup>(X)</sup> ‘Depart from me, you <sup>(Y)</sup> cursed, into <sup>(Z)</sup> the eternal fire prepared for <sup>(AA)</sup> the devil and his angels...”**

Christ himself is the great Judge of all people. We listen to Paul’s preaching in Athens:

#### **Acts 17:30-31**

<sup>30</sup> <sup>(BD)</sup> The times of ignorance <sup>(BE)</sup> God overlooked, but <sup>(BF)</sup> now he <sup>(BG)</sup> commands all people everywhere to repent, <sup>31</sup> because he has fixed <sup>(BH)</sup> a day on which <sup>(BI)</sup> he will judge the world <sup>(BJ)</sup> in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and <sup>(BK)</sup> of this he has given assurance to all <sup>(BL)</sup> by raising him from the dead.”

**NBC:** “To judge” means to take up active executive control – in the present case, to right all wrongs, redress all imbalances, and to show himself publicly to be the sovereign King, which has been his incognito status all the while.”

Christ’s resurrection established him not only as the Savior of his people but also as the Judge of all humanity. Christ’s judgment will not be prejudiced like human judges, he cannot be bribed like human judges, he does not have defective knowledge of good and evil, like human judges, but he will judge in perfect righteousness that flows from his own perfect righteousness. And he will judge all humanity “in equity” – that is in truth and fairness.

Rev. 19:11-16 speaks of Christ's coming to judge:

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw (A)heaven opened, and behold, (B)a white horse! The one sitting on it is called (C)Faithful and True, and (D)in righteousness he judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup> (E)His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are (F)many diadems, and he has (G)a name written that no one knows but himself. <sup>13</sup> He is clothed in (H)a robe dipped in (I) blood, and the name by which he is called is (J)The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies of heaven, (K)arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, (L)were following him on white horses. <sup>15</sup> (M)From his mouth comes a sharp sword (N)with which to strike down the nations, and (O)he will rule (P) them with a rod of iron. (Q)He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. <sup>16</sup> On his robe and on his thigh (R)he has a name written, (S)King of kings and Lord of lords.

And so the perfect Judge will come. Those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life will be cast into the eternal lake of fire with the devil and his angels. Those whom God has loved and brought to faith in the Savior will be given a rich welcome into Christ's everlasting kingdom in the new earth wherein will dwell only righteousness and the very presence of our resurrected Savior.

#### Applications:

1. Yahweh is not a deist God – but he is active in his creation, he has revealed his right hand and bared his holy arm in behalf of his people.

2. Has Yahweh worked his strong arm of salvation in your life ? Is he your righteous king whom you serve and worship in the name of Jesus Christ?

If not... bow before his Lordship and take as your King to serve now and forever.

3. If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ, worship him as he deserves. Worship him with exuberant worship. Stir up the internal volcano in your heart and mind and let it erupt with volcanic praise.

Not to praise him is sin.

To praise him is to give him glory, our highest calling on earth.

Rejoice that God is righteous.

He has revealed himself supremely in the incarnation.

4. In spite of troubles in our lives and in the world, exuberant praise is due him.

We are never without abundant cause for lifting up to Yahweh God in the name of Jesus exuberant praise and joy. The gift of the exuberant worship of Yahweh is the best gift God could give us as we travel the road of the life set before us.

To God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever. Amen.

-by Jeff Gregory, Pastor

Good Shepherd Community Church  
8441 Hunnicut Rd  
Dallas, TX 75228  
214-934-8126  
[www.gsccdallas.org](http://www.gsccdallas.org)