

“Praise to the Judge of All the Earth”  
Psalm 98  
(Preached at Trinity, February 26, 2012)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. **Psalm 98** follows the pattern of this series of psalms – Psalms 93-100. They belong together with a common theme: The kingly rule of God. They most likely have David as their author. They serve to exalt the sovereign reign of God over all creation.
2. As with **Psalm 96** this psalm calls for the worshippers of God to sing a new song.
  - a. In the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer in the section called the “Order for Evening Prayer” this psalm is referred to as the *Contate Domino* – “O Sing to the Lord.”
  - b. It is a new song based upon fresh reflections of the great things God has done.
  - c. What is it that is causing David to call upon the people to offer fresh praises unto God? God has performed a mighty deliverance for His people.  
In **Psalm 96** the new song seemed to focus on the proclamation that the Lord *was* coming. Now the focus is directed to the fact that He *has* come.  
**Psalm 98:2 KJV** - "The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen."
3. As we’ve gone through the psalms we’ve found psalms that deal with sin, with defeat, with lament and sorrow; psalms that speak of judgment and wrath. But **Psalm 98** contains none of this. It is purely a psalm of praise.  
**Psalm 98:4 KJV** - "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise."
4. All who read it are filled with the great sense of joy and praise that is being offered up to God.
  - James Montgomery Boice wrote, “We have come to one of the most joyful songs in the Bible.”
  - Spurgeon wrote, “This song is worthy to rank among the most devout and soul stirring of sacred lyrics.”
  - Derek Kidner wrote, “This psalm is wholly given up to praise. Here there are no comparisons with the heathen, no instructions in right worship: all is joy and exhilaration.”
5. It is no doubt Messianic which lifts us up to the heights of praise. It contains three stanzas which is how we will divide it:
  - I. The great victory of God proclaimed – **Verses 1-3**
  - II. The great praise from man professed – **Verses 4-6**
  - III. The great chorus from nature pronounced – **Verses 7-9**

I. The great victory of God proclaimed – **Verses 1-3**

A. Victory is the word that dominates and directs this first stanza. The great King has won the victory

**Psalm 98:1 KJV** - "his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory."

1. The focus of the victory – **V. 2** - "The LORD hath made known his salvation"
2. In the Old Covenant Israel was continually reminded of God's great power in deliverance. It was at the very heart of their relationship with God.  
**Exodus 20:2-3 KJV** - " I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.  
<sup>3</sup> Thou shalt have no other gods before me."
3. The Old Covenant was a continued demonstration of God's great salvation. God's salvation was displayed in many temporal displays of His power in delivering His people from their enemies.  
The psalmist calls them "marvellous things" in **Verse 1**  
The word נִלְפָּא (*pala*) refers to something surpassing, extraordinary
4. The term "right hand" is an expression to describe might and power, majesty and honor.
5. Israel had much with which to praise God; many testimonies of liberation. But all of these powerful displays of God delivering His people were only shadows of His mighty salvation to come—that which was accomplished through Jesus Christ our Deliverer

B. **Psalm 98** sings loudly with Messianic praises

1. The Lord Jesus Christ came and lived a perfect life. He died offering up Himself as a perfect sacrifice, and has risen and ascended to a perfect reign.
2. He has won the victory. The wrath of God has been appeased; the demands of justice satisfied. Satan has been crushed and the people of God have been reconciled.
3. This calls for a new song – the fullness of God's eternal covenant being revealed in Christ the King
4. The New Covenant is a glorious display of Gods salvation; the display of the great deliverance of His people – sin, death, and Satan
  - a. Deliverance from sin
    - the enslaving power of sin
    - the fearful curse of sin as God displays His wrath and anger upon all workers of iniquity

**Romans 8:1 NAS** - "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."
  - b. Deliverance from death – death shall have no power over us
  - c. Deliverance from Satan – Jesus defeated Satan at the cross. We have been transformed and freed from the lying deception of Satan who is the father of the wicked.
5. Does the knowledge of your deliverance fill your heart with all praise?

- C. The inspiration for this great salvation – **Verse 3** - "He hath remembered"
1. God has remembered His covenant. He never forgets.
  2. He has remembered His steadfast love (ESV) for His people – His covenant love. **חַסֵּד**
  3. He has remembered His faithfulness (NASB); His truth (KJV)  
More accurate: “truthfulness”  
**אֱמוּנָה** (*emunah*) – refers to steadfastness – God is steadfast to Himself and His decrees. He remembers His eternal covenant.
  4. And He will never forget you
- II. The great praise from man professed – **Verses 4-6**
- A. The result of so great salvation is universal praise  
**Psalm 98:4 KJV** - "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise."
1. This second stanza is filled with explosions of praise  
Joyful noise, loud noise, rejoicing and singing praises—every instrument of praise is employed in the praise and worship of God for His great salvation
  2. The “marvelous thing,” (V.1) that extraordinary wonderful thing today is that men can be delivered from their sin. This is the glory of the Gospel—“the LORD hath made known His salvation.” (V.2) This glorious message of hope and joy has gone out over the whole earth.
  3. The whole world is witness to this great salvation as the Gospel is proclaimed from shore to shore  
**Psalm 98:3 KJV** - "all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."
  4. For those who receive this wondrous salvation our hearts are filled with a new song, a song of wonder and awe and joy and thanksgiving. It is a song of true praise and worship
- B. The sad truth is few find this joy
1. This psalm provided Isaac Watts the motivation for the great hymn, “Joy to the World” the Lord is come; let earth receive her King . . .”
  2. Because of the sinfulness of the hearts of men few express this joyful noise. People are joyful over those things that fill their hearts:  
Things that satisfy – but they satisfy for only a moment.  
Things that thrill – but they thrill for only a moment  
Only Christ can provide lasting joy.  
“let every heart prepare Him room – and heaven and nature sing.”
  3. This is a psalm of praise from start to finish. It is great. It is exuberant.  
Can you join in this great chorus of great joy?

### III. The great chorus from nature pronounced – **Verses 7-9**

#### A. The praise of nature is unique

1. It is inarticulate – It doesn't speak with words of understanding.
2. Yet, creation is a unified chorus of praise  
**Psalm 19:1-3 KJV** - "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. <sup>2</sup> Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. <sup>3</sup> *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*"  
**Psalm 72:19 KJV** - "And blessed *be* his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory; Amen, and Amen."
3. The psalmist is painting a picture of loud universal praise  
**Psalm 98:7-8 KJV** - "Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. <sup>8</sup> Let the floods clap *their* hands: let the hills be joyful together"
4. Creation is shouting the existence of its Creator
  - a. The Apostle Paul says that this revelation of God is so sure and definite that no one can mistake the existence of God.
  - b. It is so sure that all men are left without excuse.  
**Romans 1:20** – "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."
5. Ultimately, creation is shouting forth the glory of Christ  
**Colossians 1:15-16 KJV** - " Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: <sup>16</sup> For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:"  
**Colossians 1:19 KJV** - "For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;"

#### B. All of creation is rejoicing over the great salvation of Christ

1. With creation there is a great sense of eager anticipation  
**Psalm 98:8-9 KJV** - "let the hills be joyful together <sup>9</sup> Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth"
2. Each day the time draws nearer – the time of restoration  
 All of creation will be restored to the perfection of God's holiness  
**Colossians 1:20 KJV** - "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven."
3. There is a great sense where all creation is earnestly awaiting this final restoration  
**Psalm 98:8-9 KJV** - "Let the floods clap *their* hands: let the hills be joyful together <sup>9</sup> Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity."

**Romans 8:21-22 KJV** - "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."

**2 Peter 3:12-13 KJV** - "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? <sup>13</sup> Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

3. A word to the lost:  
 Can you imagine that all of creation is earnestly awaiting the final restoration of Christ?  
 Can you imagine that when God sets all things right, when everything is restored to perfect harmony with our Creator you will be cast forever into hell?  
 Can you imagine that while all of creation is rejoicing over the coming of Christ with joy will be trembling in fear? In fact, you are trembling already.

#### Conclusion:

1. This psalm is a glorious celebration of God's wondrous salvation in Christ. We are waiting in earnest expectation for our coming redemption. While most fear we look with expectation.  
**Luke 21:26-28 KJV** - "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. <sup>27</sup> And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. <sup>28</sup> And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."
2. Do you understand God's wondrous gift of salvation? Have you experienced the wondrous joy?  
**Psalm 98:9 KJV** - "for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity."
- Luke 2:10-14 KJV** - "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, <sup>14</sup> Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."