

PSALM 98

This psalm is to the same purport with the two foregoing psalms; it is a prophecy of the kingdom of the Messiah, the settling of it up in the world, and the bringing of the Gentiles into it. The Chaldee entitles it a prophetic psalm. It sets forth,

I. The glory of the Redeemer (v. 1-3).

II. The joy of the redeemed (v. 4-9). If we in a right manner give to Christ this glory, and upon right grounds take to ourselves this joy, in singing this psalm, we sing it with understanding. If those who saw Christ's triumph thus, much more reason have we to do so who see these things accomplished and share in the better things provided for us, ~~814~~ Hebrews 11:40.

~~814~~ PSALM 98:1-3

AN INVITATION TO PRAISE

A psalm

We are here called upon again to *sing unto the Lord a new song*, as before, ~~814~~ Psalm 96:1. "Sing a most excellent song, the best song you have." Let the song of Christ's love be like Solomon's on that subject, a *song of songs*. A song of praise for redeeming love is a *new song*, such a song as had not been sung before; for this is a mystery which was hidden from ages and generations. Converts sing a *new song*, very different from what they had sung; they change their wonder and change their joy, and therefore change their note. If the grace of God put a new heart into our breasts, it will therewith put a new song into our mouths. In the new Jerusalem there will be new songs sung, that will be new to eternity, and never wax old. Let this new song be sung to the praise of God, in consideration of these four things: —

I. The wonders he has wrought: *He has done marvellous things*, v. 1.

Note, The work of our salvation by Christ is a work of wonder. If we take a view of all the steps of it from the contrivance of it, and the counsels of

God concerning it before all time, to the consummation of it, and its everlasting consequences when time shall be no more, we shall say, God has in it *done marvellous things*; it is all his doing and it is *marvellous in our eyes*. The more it is known the more it will be admired.

II. The conquests he has won: *His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him the victory*. Our Redeemer has surmounted all the difficulties that lay in the way of our redemption, has broken through them all, and was not discouraged by the services or sufferings appointed him. He has subdued all the enemies that opposed it, has gotten the victory over Satan, disarmed him, and cast him out of his strong-holds, has *spoiled principalities and powers* (⁵¹²⁵Colossians 2:15), has *taken the prey from the mighty* (²³⁴²⁴Isaiah 49:24), and given death his death's wound. He has gotten a clear and complete victory, not only for himself, but for us also, for we through him are more than conquerors. He got this victory by his own power; there was *none to help, none to uphold*, none that durst venture into the service; but his *right hand and his holy arm*, which are always stretched out with good success, because they are never stretched out but in a good cause, these have *gotten him the victory*, have *brought him relief or deliverance*. God's power and faithfulness, called here *his right hand and his holy arm*, brought relief to the Lord Jesus, in raising him from the dead, and exalting him personally to the right hand of God; so Dr. Hammond.

III. The discoveries he has made to the world of the work of redemption. What he has wrought for us he has revealed to us, and both by his Son; the gospel-revelation is that on which the gospel-kingdom is founded — *the word which God sent*, (⁴⁴¹⁶Acts 10:36). The *opening of the sealed book* is that which is to be celebrated with songs of praise (⁴¹¹⁸Revelation 5:8), because by it was brought to light the mystery which had long been hid in God. Observe,

1. The subject of this discovery — his salvation and his righteousness, v. 3. Righteousness and salvation are often put together; as (²⁸¹⁰Isaiah 61:10; 46:13; 51:5, 6, 8). Salvation denotes the redemption itself, and righteousness the way in which it was wrought, by the righteousness of Christ. Or the salvation includes all our gospel-privileges and the righteousness all our gospel-duties; both are made known, for God has joined them together, and we must not separate them. Or righteousness is

here put for the way of our justification by Christ, which is revealed in the gospel to be by faith, ^{<817>}Romans 1:17.

2. The plainness of this discovery. He has openly shown it, not in types and figures as under the law, but it is written as with a sunbeam, that he that runs may read it. Ministers are appointed to preach it with all plainness of speech.

3. The extent of this discovery. It is made in the sight of the heathen, and not of the Jews only: *All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God*; for to the Gentiles was the word of salvation sent.

IV. The accomplishment of the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament, in this (v. 3): *He has remembered his mercy and his truth towards the house of Israel*. God had mercy in store for the seed of Abraham, and had given them many and great assurances of the kindness he designed them in the latter days; and it was in pursuance of all those that he raised up his Son Jesus to be not only a *light to lighten the Gentiles*, but *the glory of his people Israel*; for he sent him, in the first place, to bless *them*. God is said, in sending Christ, to *perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember the holy covenant*, ^{<417>}Luke 1:72. It was in consideration of that, and not of their merit.

^{<9804>}PSALM 98:4-9

AN INVITATION TO PRAISE

The setting up of the kingdom of Christ is here represented as a matter of joy and praise.

I. Let all the children of men rejoice in it, for they all have, or may have, benefit by it. Again and again we are here called upon by all ways and means possible to express our joy in it and give God praise for it: *Make a joyful noise*, as before, ^{<981>}Psalm 95:1, 2. *Make a loud noise*, as those that are affected with those glad tidings and are desirous to affect others with them. *Rejoice and sing praise*, sing *Hosannas* (^{<4299>}Matthew 21:9), sing *Hallelujahs*, ^{<696>}Revelation 19:6. Let him be welcomed to the throne, as new kings are, with acclamations of joy and loud shouts, till the earth ring again, as when Solomon was proclaimed, ^{<1040>}1 Kings 1:40. And let the

shouts of the crowd be accompanied with the *singers and players on instruments* (^{<387>}Psalm 87:7; 68:25), as is usual in such solemnities.

1. Let sacred songs attend the new King: “*Sing praise, sing with the voice of a psalm*. Express your joy; thus proclaim it, thus excite it yet more, and thus propagate it among others.”

2. Let these be assisted with sacred music, not only with the soft and gentle melody of *the harp*, but since it is a victorious King whose glory is to be celebrated, who goes forth conquering and to conquer, let him be proclaimed with the martial sound of the *trumpet* and *cornet*, v. 6. Let all this joy be directed to God, and expressed in a solemn religious manner: *Make a joyful noise to the Lord*, v. 4. *Sing to the Lord*, (v. 5); do it *before the Lord, the King*, v. 6. Carnal mirth is an enemy to this holy joy. When David danced before the ark he pleaded that *it was before the Lord*; and the piety and devotion of the intention not only vindicated what he did, but commended it. We must rejoice *before the Lord* whenever we draw near to him (^{<452>}Deuteronomy 12:12), before *the Lord Jesus*, and before him, not only as the Saviour, but as the King, the King of kings, the church's King, and our King.

II. Let the inferior creatures rejoice in it, v. 7-9. This is to the same purport with what we had before (^{<191>}Psalm 96:11-13): *Let the sea roar*, and let that be called, not as it used to be, a *dreadful noise*, but a *joyful noise*; for the coming of Christ, and the salvation wrought out by him, have quite altered the property of the troubles and terrors of this world, so that when the floods *lift up their voice, lift up their waves*, we must not construe that to be the sea roaring against us, but rather rejoicing with us. Let the *floods* express their joy, as men do when they *clap their hands*; and let the hills, that trembled for fear before God when he came down to give the law at Mount Sinai, dance for joy before him when his gospel is preached and that word of the Lord goes forth from Zion in a still small voice: *Let the hills be joyful together before the Lord*. This intimates that the kingdom of Christ would be a blessing to the whole creation; but that, as the inferior creatures declare the glory of the Creator (^{<191>}Psalm 19:1), so they declare the glory of the Redeemer, for by him all things not only subsist in their being, but consist in their order. It intimates likewise that the children of men would be wanting in paying their due respects to the Redeemer, and therefore that he must look for his honour from the sea and the floods, which would shame the stupidity and ingratitude of mankind.

And perhaps respect is here had to the *new heavens* and the *new earth*, which we yet, according to his promise, look for (^{GENES}2 Peter 3:13), and this second mention of his coming (after the like, Psalm 96) may principally refer to his second coming, when all these things shall be so dissolved as to be refined; then shall he come to *judge the world with righteousness*. In the prospect of that day all that are sanctified do rejoice, and even the sea, and the floods, and the hills, would rejoice if they could. One would think that Virgil had these psalms in his eye, as well as the oracles of the Cumean Sibyl, in his fourth eclogue, where he either ignorantly or basely applies to Asinius Pollio the ancient prophecies, which at that time were expected to be fulfilled; for he lived in the reign of Augustus Caesar, a little before our Saviour's birth. He owns they looked for the birth of a child from heaven that should be a great blessing to the world, and restore the golden age: —

Jam nova progenies coelo demittitur alto —

*A new race descends from the lofty sky;
and that should take away sin: —*

*Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras —*

*Thy influence shall efface every stain of corruption,
And free the world from alarm.*

Many other things he says of this long-looked-for child, which Ludovicus Vives, in his notes on that eclogue, thinks applicable to Christ; and he concludes, as the psalmist here, with a prospect of the rejoicing of the whole creation herein: —

Aspice, venturo laetentur ut omnia saeclo —

See how this promis'd age makes all rejoice.

And, if all rejoice, why should not we?