

PSALMS

Chapter 98

Make a Joyful Noise to the LORD

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. 2 The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. 3 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. 4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises! 5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody! 6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD! 7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it! 8 Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together 9 before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

Ps 98 A call to celebrate with joy the righteous reign of the Lord. Its beginning and end echo Ps 96. (See introductions to Ps 93; 95.) The three stanzas progressively extend the call to ever wider circles: (1) the worshiping congregation at the temple; (2) all the peoples of the earth; (3) the whole creation. The first stanza recalls God’s revelation of his righteousness (v. 2) in the past; the last stanza speaks confidently of his coming rule “in righteousness” (v. 9); the middle stanza is enclosed by the jubilant cry, “Shout for joy” (vv. 4, 6). (CSB)

Focuses exclusively on the Lord. Similar to Ps 96. Other gods or enemies are absent. The psalm’s sole purpose is to praise the victorious God and His marvelous works. (TLSB)

Format: Vv 1–3, joyous worship begins with Israel; vv 4–6, it expands to all the earth; vv 7–9, it includes the whole creation. (TLSB)

Unlike its predecessors, this psalm is almost pure praise. Idols and enemies have receded into the background. All we see is the Lord’s throne. (PBC)

98:1–3 The call to celebrate in song God’s saving acts in behalf of his people. (CSB)

98:1 *sing...new song* – This means to experience the lord’s presence and blessing in a new way so that there will be new substance for the praise. (A Commentary on the Psalms - Ross)

marvelous things. One word in Hbr; also translated as “wonders” (Ex 3:20). (TLSB)

98:2 *made known ... revealed ... the nations*. God’s saving acts in behalf of his people are also his self-revelation to the nations; in this sense God is his own evangelist. (CSB)

salvation ... righteousness. God’s saving acts reveal his righteousness. (CSB)

98:3 *love ... faithfulness*. That is, love-and-faithfulness. This compound expression often sums up God’s covenant commitment to his people. (CSB)

98:4–6 The call to all the earth to join in the celebration. (CSB)

Praises of worship are joyous, unrestrained, and exuberant. The psalmist calls for outburst of song and music, words and acclamation for God’s marvelous victories on behalf of His people.

Augustine: “Praise Him not with the voice only; take up works, that you may not only sing, but work also” (NPNF 1 8:481). (TLSB)

98:5 *lyre*. Much smaller, and with fewer strings (usually 6 to 12), than their modern counterparts. (CSB)

98:6 *trumpets*. The special long, straight trumpets of the sanctuary (referred to only here in Psalms. (CSB)

horn. The more common trumpet. (CSB)

98:7–9 The call to the whole creation to celebrate. (CSB)

98:7 *sea ... world*. The two great regions of creaturely life. (CSB)

98:8 *rivers ... hills*. From the rivers to the mountains, let every feature of the whole earth clap and sing. (CSB)

98:9 *comes to judge*. Israel in faith lived between the past (see vv. 1–3) and the future righteous (saving) acts of God. (CSB)

Ps 98 The defeats of life are discouraging. Thanks be to God that He is victorious for us! Sin and death are conquered. Satan’s head is crushed. Eternally, we are God’s children. All creation is waiting for that final day of redemption. For the Lord’s victory is an empty tomb on Easter morning. • Thank You, Lord, for the glorious victory of our salvation, which only You could give us! Amen. (TLSB)