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REJOICING IN THE GOD WHO SAVES

A Gospel Reflection on Psalm 98

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Psalm 98 rises as a song of praise for the whole earth. Its message stretches across nations and seas, reaching every corner of creation and calling all things to respond to the glory of God. The psalmist draws us into a chorus already rising, an anthem fully inspired by the mighty and marvelous works of the Lord.

At the heart of this psalm stands a truth both simple and radiant. God has acted. He has made His salvation known. He has revealed His righteousness openly before the nations. What He has purposed, He has brought to light in power and grace. Because of this, His people sing. Their praise flows from hearts awakened to the beauty of His saving work.

Psalm 98 draws us into a deep and steady confidence in the work of God. Salvation flows from His sovereign will, His perfect power, and His enduring faithfulness. The praise of His people rises from this sure foundation. He saves. He reigns. He will judge the world in righteousness.

In a world longing for hope and restoration, this psalm anchors the heart in the certainty of who God is and what He has done. It calls us to lift our voices with joy, to join the song of redemption, and to rest in the assurance that the God who has acted will bring all His purposes to their glorious completion.

A Song Born from God's Saving Work

The psalm opens with a call that is both simple and profound: "Oh sing to the Lord a new song." This is not merely a summons to fresh words or a different melody, but to renewed praise flowing from a heart awakened again to the greatness of what God has done. The "new song" rises wherever God's people freshly behold His saving work. It is the response of those who have seen His mercy, tasted His grace, and cannot remain silent.

The reason for this song is clear and compelling: "for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him." The language is vivid and full of strength. God's right hand and His holy arm speak of His sovereign power and unquestioned authority. Salvation is not portrayed as a joint effort between God and man. It is His work, accomplished by His might, and carried out for His glory. What He begins, He completes. What He purposes, He brings to pass.

The prophet Isaiah echoes this same theme with striking clarity: "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him" (Isaiah 59:16 KJV). There was no one to step in, no one able to bridge the gap created by sin. So God Himself acted. He did not wait for human strength to rise to the occasion. In mercy and power, He intervened. His purposes stood firm, and His own arm accomplished all that He intended.

This truth finds its fullest and most glorious expression in the person and work of Jesus Christ. In Him, the saving arm of the Lord is revealed with unmistakable clarity. Every miracle, every word, and ultimately His sacrificial death points to the power of God at work to redeem His people. At the cross, what appeared to be weakness was in fact divine victory. There, Christ secured redemption once and for all.

As Scripture declares, "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15 KJV). The cross is not a symbol of defeat, but a proclamation of triumph. Sin is conquered. Death is overcome. The powers of darkness are put to open shame. Redemption is accomplished, and salvation is made certain for all who are in Christ.

This is why the song must be sung. It is new because the mercies of God are ever fresh to His people. It is new because the glory of Christ's finished work can never be exhausted. And it is new because each generation, and each heart awakened by grace, joins in the same enduring chorus: the Lord has done marvelous things, and His salvation stands secure forever.

The Revelation of God's Righteousness

The psalm continues by declaring a truth that stands at the very heart of redemptive history: God has made His salvation known. What was once promised and anticipated has now been revealed openly and clearly. “The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.” This is not a hidden work, nor a message confined to one people or place. It is a saving act that God Himself has brought into the light, so that all the earth might see and know.

The gospel carries this glorious message outward to the ends of the earth. It proclaims not only that God saves, but how He saves. In the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed, not as a distant standard we cannot reach, but as a gift accomplished and provided through Jesus Christ. As the apostle Paul writes, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth... For therein is the righteousness of God revealed” (Romans 1:16–17 KJV). The gospel is not merely information. It is the very power of God at work, bringing life to the dead and hope to the lost.

At the cross, we see the clearest display of this righteousness. There, God's justice and mercy meet in perfect harmony. Sin is not overlooked. It is judged fully and finally in the person of Christ. Yet sinners are not cast away. They are redeemed, forgiven, and brought near. The righteousness of God shines forth, not only in His holiness, but in His gracious provision of a Savior who stands in our place. Here is a truth that steadies the heart and humbles the soul. Our salvation rests entirely upon what God has done.

The psalmist also draws our attention to the deep roots of this saving work in God's covenant faithfulness: “He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.” This language assures us that God has not forgotten a single promise. His steadfast love endures. His faithfulness does not waver. What He has spoken, He brings to pass in His perfect time and according to His perfect wisdom.

This faithfulness stretches all the way back to the promise given to Abraham: “And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3 KJV). What was once spoken as a promise now unfolds before our eyes as a global reality. Through Christ, the blessing of salvation extends to the nations. The message of grace crosses every boundary, reaching people from every tribe and tongue.

So we stand in awe of a God who not only saves, but who keeps His word with unwavering faithfulness. The nations now behold the salvation of our God. And we, who have received this mercy, are called to rejoice in it, to rest in it, and to proclaim it, trusting that the God who has made His salvation known will continue to draw people to Himself for His glory.

A Call for Joyful Worship

The psalm moves outward with a widening invitation, calling not just a single people, but all the earth to rejoice before the Lord: “Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!” The language is rich, full, and overflowing. Joy does not remain quiet or restrained. It rises from the heart and finds expression in song. Voices are lifted. Instruments resound. Worship becomes a glad and holy celebration of who God is and all that He has done in His saving mercy.

This is the kind of worship that engages the whole person. It is not empty noise, but heartfelt praise shaped by truth. The psalmist calls for a response that is both reverent and joyful, rooted in the knowledge of God’s character and His mighty works. As Scripture declares elsewhere, “O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph” (Psalm 47:1 KJV). The people of God respond with gladness because His saving work is sure, His promises are certain, and His grace does not fail.

At the center of this rejoicing stands a great and steady truth. The Lord is King. The psalm reminds us, “With trumpets and the sound of the horn make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!” This is not a distant or uncertain rule. It is a present and reigning authority. God does not merely offer salvation. He reigns to accomplish it, to apply it, and to bring it to its appointed end.

This kingship is fulfilled and made clear in Jesus Christ. As the Father declares, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (Psalm 2:6 KJV). The risen and exalted Christ now reigns with all authority in heaven and on earth. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him... That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow” (Philippians 2:9–10 KJV). His rule is not threatened, and His purposes cannot be overturned.

For the people of God, this truth is a deep well of comfort and assurance. The same King who reigns in glory is the One who has redeemed us by His blood. His kingship guarantees the fulfillment of His saving purposes. He gathers His people with sovereign grace, and He keeps them with unfailing care. Not one of His promises will fall to the ground. Not one of His people will be lost.

So we rejoice, not only because of what God has done, but because of who He is. Our King reigns. His salvation stands secure. And our songs rise with confidence, knowing that the One who rules over all things is working all things together for the good of His people and for the glory of His name.

Creation Joins the Chorus

The call to praise extends far beyond humanity. All creation is summoned to join the chorus of worship. The psalmist gives us a sweeping and vivid picture: “Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it! Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together.” This is not mere poetic flourish. It is a reminder that the whole created order, in its own God-ordained way, responds to the majesty and mercy of its Creator.

The imagery is both beautiful and expansive. The restless seas lift their voices. The rivers, ever moving, seem to clap in rhythmic praise. The hills, steady and ancient, rise as if singing together in joy. Creation is not indifferent to the work of God. It bears witness to His power and echoes His glory. Even now, it reflects something of His goodness, though marred by the effects of the fall.

Yet Scripture also teaches us that creation’s song is not yet what it will be. There is a longing woven into the fabric of the world itself. As the apostle Paul writes, “Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Romans 8:21 KJV). Creation groans under the weight of sin’s curse, but it does not groan without hope. It waits. It leans forward, as it were, in eager anticipation of the day when God will make all things new.

This truth enlarges our understanding of redemption. God’s saving work in Christ is not small or confined. It reaches to the very edges of all He has made. The same Lord who redeems sinners will also restore creation, removing every trace of corruption and bringing it into harmony with His perfect will.

So when the psalm calls the seas to roar and the hills to sing, it is inviting us to hear not only present praise, but future joy. There is a day coming when creation’s song will be full and unhindered, when every part of the created order will resound with gladness. And even now, as we wait, we join that song by faith, lifting our voices in hope, knowing that the God who began this good work will surely bring it to completion.

The Coming King and Righteous Judge

The psalm concludes with a forward-looking promise that lifts our eyes beyond the present moment and anchors our hope in what is sure and certain: “For he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.” This is not a word meant to trouble the hearts of God’s people, but to steady them. The coming of the Lord is a source of deep and abiding joy, because His judgment is not flawed or partial. It is marked by perfect righteousness, unerring justice, and holy truth.

In a world where justice often feels delayed or distorted, this promise reminds us that nothing is overlooked and nothing is forgotten. Every wrong will be addressed, every injustice made right. As the Scriptures declare, “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained” (Acts 17:31 KJV). Christ Jesus, the crucified and risen Lord, is the appointed Judge. The One who bore sin in His own body will stand as the righteous Judge of all the earth, and He will judge with perfect equity, without error and without bias.

For those who are in Christ, this truth does not produce fear but deep and abiding comfort. The Judge is also our Savior. The One who will sit upon the throne is the same One who has already taken our condemnation upon Himself. Therefore we cling to the promise, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1 KJV). Our hope rests not in our own righteousness, but in His finished work.

The coming judgment, then, is not merely an end, but a revelation. It will display the fullness of God’s righteousness before all creation. It will unveil the beauty and completeness of His redemptive plan. Every promise will be seen as true. Every act of grace will be magnified. And the people of God will rejoice, knowing that the God who saves is also the God who judges rightly, faithfully, and for His glory.

Living in the Joy of Sovereign Grace

Psalms 98 calls us to respond. It calls us to sing, to rejoice, and to proclaim.

God has accomplished salvation by His own mighty power, not because of anything we have done, but because of His steadfast love and unfailing mercy. He has made His righteousness known to us in the gospel, opening our eyes to behold the beauty of His grace in Jesus Christ. This same God reigns even now as King over all the earth, sovereign in wisdom, perfect in justice, and tender in compassion toward His people. And He will come again, not only to judge in righteousness, but to set all things right and to gather His redeemed safely into His presence.

This is the song of sovereign grace, a song that steadies weary hearts and lifts burdened souls. Salvation belongs to the Lord from beginning to end. He is the Author, the Accomplisher, and the Finisher of our faith. When we feel weak, He remains strong. When we are uncertain, His purposes stand firm.

So we sing. We worship with joy, even in the midst of trials. We proclaim His salvation to the ends of the earth, knowing that His Word does not return empty. And we rest, truly rest, in the finished work of Christ, confident that the God who saves will surely bring His good purposes to completion in us and for His glory.

“Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb” (Revelation 7:10 KJV).



*At the heart of Redeemer’s ministry is the pastoral leadership of **Jason K. Boothe**, who serves as pastor of Redeemer Church in Piketon, Ohio. Known for his warm, Gospel-centered preaching and careful exposition of Scripture, Pastor Boothe consistently points listeners to the finished work of Jesus Christ as the foundation of the Christian life. His ministry emphasizes the sufficiency of Christ, the comfort of God’s promises, and the assurance believers have through faith alone. Through preaching, teaching, and pastoral care, he seeks to help ordinary people see the extraordinary grace of God at work in His Word and in their daily lives.*

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