

Israel's Hymnal  
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### PSALM NINETY-EIGHT

[Pss 98:1] Oh sing unto Jehovah a new song; For he hath done marvelous things: His right hand, and his holy arm, hath wrought salvation for him.

[Pss 98:2] Jehovah hath made known his salvation: His righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the nations.

[Pss 98:3] He hath remembered his lovingkindness and his faithfulness toward the house of Israel: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

[Pss 98:4] Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah, all the earth: Break forth and sing for joy, yea, sing praises.

[Pss 98:5] Sing praises unto Jehovah with the harp; With the harp and the voice of melody.

[Pss 98:6] With trumpets and sound of cornet Make a joyful noise before the King, Jehovah.

[Pss 98:7] Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; The world, and they that dwell therein;

[Pss 98:8] Let the floods clap their hands; Let the hills sing for joy together

[Pss 98:9] Before Jehovah; for he cometh to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with equity.

### THE RETURN OF THE MESSIAH AND HIS EARTHLY REIGN

I. A vision of the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth (vss. 1-3)

II. A call to all nations to praise the King, Jehovah (vss. 4-6)

III. A call to all nature to rejoice because of the reign of King Messiah (vss. 7-9)

Psalm 98 simply reiterates many things that have been spoken in other psalms and by the various prophets. The dominant note is that of praise and joy because of what King Messiah will do when He returns to establish His reign of righteousness upon the earth.

Where there is no vision the people perish. Acting upon this principle the psalmist gives a vision of the marvelous work of King Messiah when He comes to reveal God's salvation and righteousness upon the earth. This is found in the first three verses. In verses 4-6 is a universal call to all nations to rejoice with exceeding joy and to praise King Messiah when He does come. This hymn concludes with a dramatic call to all nature to burst forth into praise before Jehovah who is coming to judge the world and to establish His reign of righteousness.

### I. A vision of the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth (vss. 1-3)

The psalm opens with these words: "Oh sing unto Jehovah a new song." There must be a new experience before there can be a new song--in the proper sense of the term. In these three verses the psalmist sees the marvelous things which King Messiah will do when He puts down unrighteousness and all wickedness in order that He might establish His glorious reign upon the earth.

The first statement which enumerates these marvelous things, and illustrates the occasion for the calling of this song begins with these words: "for he hath done marvelous things." The term rendered "marvelous things" primarily means a miracle, that which causes one to marvel. From the context it is clear that the author is speaking about some miraculous things which the Lord will do in connection with His second coming--at the end of the Tribulation. In order to learn the exact items which are included in this statement, one must read carefully the description of the three series of judgments that are set forth under the symbolism of the seals (Rev., chap. 6), the trumpets (Rev., chaps. 8,9), and the bowls (Rev., chap. 16). Of course these great marvels are referred to in other portions of the Scriptures, but in the Book Revelation they are set forth chronologically and in detail.

The second thing for which the psalmist calls upon the people of earth to praise God is this: "His right hand, and his holy arm, hath wrought salvation for him." Sometimes the expression, "the arm of Jehovah," refers to the strength of the Almighty. At other times it indicates the Messiah. The context will have to determine what is meant. Sometimes, however, the facts of the connection do not always give sufficient data to allow one to be positive in his interpretation; but, when this sentence is studied in the light of related passages, one comes to the conclusion that in all probability the arm and hand of Jehovah here referred to indicate the Messiah who has wrought salvation for Him (Jehovah the Father) in His great desire to save fallen men. This salvation was wrought nineteen hundred plus years ago for all who believe. But from the immediate context we know that the salvation here referred to is a complete deliverance of the world from the power of Satan and sin, which accomplishment will be achieved by the personal, visible, bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth.

The next item for which men are called upon to praise God is stated in these words:

"Jehovah hath made known his salvation.

His righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the nations."

It is true, that when the Lord Jesus purchased our redemption upon Calvary, He commissioned His Apostles to go forth and tell all nations about that salvation. But what the psalmist is talking about here is that final deliverance at the return of Messiah. He therefore says that "Jehovah hath made known his salvation." This prediction looks forward to the time when Messiah will have come to earth and converted Israel will take this message of redeeming love to the nations. Moreover, His righteousness He will have showed in the sight of all the nations when He returns, taking vengeance upon all who know not God and all who obey not the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Thess., chap. 1). It is true that He became our righteousness when He took our place upon the accursed tree of the cross. Salvation by the grace of God because of the righteousness of Christ, offered to sinners upon the condition of faith, was proclaimed

by the Apostles in their day and has been proclaimed to the present time. But when the Messiah returns, His righteousness will be showed to all the nations.

This first division of the psalm ends with these words:

"He hath remembered his lovingkindness and his faithfulness toward the house of Israel:  
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

Throughout the long centuries of Israel's wanderings among the nations, it has seemed to her that God has forgotten His lovingkindness and His faithfulness toward the house of Israel. When she rejected her Messiah, God figuratively speaking, turned His back upon her and left her to her own fate. Thus her plaintive wail throughout the centuries has been, "O Jehovah, how long? How long will thine anger smoke against us?" The answer to this query is this: Whenever Israel is given the truth about her national sin of rejecting King Messiah, is convicted of the enormity of the crime, confesses it, repudiates it, and accepts Him as Savior, the Lord will remember His loving-kindness and His faithfulness to all the house of Israel living at that time. The Lord Jesus said to the people of Israel in His last public sermon (Matt., chap. 23) that He would go away and would never return until the leaders seek His face and say, "blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Because of the times in which we are living, the paramount task for the church of God to perform is to give the message to all Israel in order that she might make this confession of her national sin and plead for Him to return. When she does, He will come and bring the salvation that is mentioned in these verses. (See Hosea 5:15-6:3.)

This section closes with these words: "All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." Thus this portion of the psalm ends with a vision of the full and complete manifestation and proclamation of the gospel of the grace of God and His delivering power to the entire world.

## II. A call to all nations to praise the King, Jehovah (vss. 4-6)

As we have just seen, in the first three verses of this psalm we have a vision of the return of Messiah and the marvelous results which will follow His appearance upon earth again. In anticipation of this wonderful event the psalmist, in verse 4, calls upon all the earth to make a joyful noise unto Jehovah:

"Make a joyful noise unto Jehovah, all the earth: Break forth and sing for joy, yea, sing praises."

Men must sing songs of melody in their hearts to the Lord. God does not want any formal, mechanical worship, rendered to Him. In the second line of this verse, in an imploring tone the psalmist pleaded for all the earth to "Break forth and sing for joy, yea, sing praises."

In verse 5 and 6a the inspired poet called upon the people of earth to use all kinds of instruments of music in their praising God for what He will do when the Messiah returns to earth to deliver it and to manifest His righteousness to all people:

"Sing praises unto Jehovah with the harp; With harp and the voice of melody.  
With trumpets and sound of cornet ..."

This section concludes with the following words: "Make a joyful noise before the King Jehovah." For a brief moment we must pause and look at this statement. Men are urged to make a joyful noise "before the King, Jehovah." This passage assumes that the King is upon earth at the time here foreseen and that all men are urged to make a joyful noise in His presence.

But who is this King? None other than Jehovah! The question as to His personality is set forth in the following quotation:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors:  
And the king of glory will come in. Who is the King of Glory?  
Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle.  
Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors;  
And the King of glory will come in.  
Who is this King of glory? Jehovah of hosts, He is the King of glory."  
(Ps. 24:7-10).

Who is this King of glory? The answer is that He is Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle. Jerusalem--the Jewish people--is urged to lift up her head and to welcome Him into her midst. The day when King Messiah returns to this earth to establish His reign of righteousness will be the greatest day that will ever dawn for this earth. For this reason the psalmist calls upon all people and all races to render this praise and homage before earth's future King.

### III. A call to all nature to rejoice because of the reign of King Messiah (vss. 7-9)

In the final section of the psalm, consisting of verses 7-9, the sacred writer turns to all nature and speaks to it as if it were animate and vibrant with life. Thus he calls upon the sea and all that is in it to roar with joy and acclaim. Then he turns to the land--the world and they that dwell therein--likewise to render praise and homage to King Messiah. The floods are thought of as living beings and urged to clap their hands for joy, and the hills are exhorted to sing, with rejoicing together, because of that which is about to be accomplished.

The psalm concludes with this marvelous prediction: "For he (Jehovah) comes to judge the earth: He will judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with equity" (vs. 9). The judges in conquered Europe for the last three years (Feb 1945) have been groaning under the tyrannical heel of the Nazi tyranny and have been looking forward to the day of liberation. The joy of those peoples who have been liberated by the arm of the United Nations knew no bounds. They expressed their joy in every conceivable manner and demonstration. The world will rejoice when Nazi tyranny and Japanese barbarism are forever crushed and rendered impotent. All peoples will be glad when peace is restored to the earth again at the conclusion of this most horrible of all wars.

When Messiah returns in fulfillment of this passage, the bonds of the great oppressor will be broken, the curse will be lifted and humanity delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. When Messiah comes back to his earth, Satan, the adversary of man and the cause of all ills and trouble will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit where he will remain for a thousand years. He will be unable to deceive the nations during that period of Messiah's glorious reign. All evil spirits under him will likewise be incarcerated in the pit of the abyss. (See Isa. 24:21, 22; Rev. 20:1-4).

When the Messiah returns in His glory and sits upon His throne, He will gather all nations before Him and will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. Only those who are put upon His right hand will He allow to live upon the earth and enter His kingdom.

The Lord Messiah will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity--throughout the entire Millennial Age. Jerusalem will be His capital. It will not be the same, old, filthy, dirty squalid Jerusalem which it is now (1945), but it will be purged, cleansed, created the joy of the whole earth. It will be the religious center of the world and people from all nations will go up to it to be taught of the God of Jacob--the Lord Jesus Christ.

Zephaniah spoke of this same glorious reign of the Lord Jesus in the following passage:

"Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel: be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. Jehovah hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the King of Israel, even Jehovah, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not fear evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not; O Zion, let not thy hands be slack. Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty one who will save; he will rest in his love; he will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. 3:14-17).