

SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG!

Surely The Presence Of The Lord Is In This Place

Psalm 98: 1-9 and Genesis 28: 16, 17 – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

In 47 and 1/2 years of Gospel ministry, only once before have I preached from Psalm 98. That time was just after the wedding of my eldest daughter, Amy to Jesse Foreman. Her wedding was February 4, 1995, on a Saturday. It was a day of glorious joy. I got home at 10:30 PM and spent time with the Lord on the message I had prepared to preach. Strangely, late as it was, about 20 years ago, the Lord wouldn't give me peace to preach that message I had prepared. I got in the car and went back to the study at church. A few minutes after midnight that night, in the wee hours of February 5th, the Lord revealed to me His will and it was Psalm 98. I never had time to exegete this psalm. I believe one of the reasons why I was drawn to Psalm 98 back then was because I was totally thrilled with the marriage of my daughter Amy to Jesse Foreman. The wedding went well and I had a song in my heart to the Lord for both of them. This morning I have a song in my heart. I want to break Psalm 98 down into seven stanzas. Let's discover the seven-fold reasons why the Psalmist calls this his new song to the Lord. The Lord is calling us to sing, so don't be surprised at songs along the way. When I ask you to sing along with me, would you join in with me in praise and worship? Let's obey this mighty call of God today to sing to the Lord a new song. Just prepare your hearts now that I will be calling us at least five times to sing along. It will be great preparation for all of us to return this evening to join in our Sunday Night Sing, singing 12 of your selected songs before Pastor Larry preaches. Now what are these seven reasons to sing?

SING THE GLORY OF THE RIGHT HAND OF THE LORD'S

SALVATION. (I.) Notice with me, Psalm 98: 1 – “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.” As you recall from Psalm 96: 1, Psalm 98 begins with the same first line—“O sing to the Lord a new song.” The Hebrew word for new is **chadash** meaning a refreshed or renewed song to the Lord. I spoke of God's mercies in Lamentations 3: 23 being chadash—new or renewed like a sour dough revived for the next batch of pancakes. Why is the Psalmist singing of the glory of God's salvation or deliverance. Verse one says in the ESV—“...for He has done marvelous things. The first time this word glory or marvel or the verb—“to be marvelous” is used in the Bible from the mouth of the Lord speaking to Abraham in Genesis 18: 9-14. The Hebrew word is **pala**. Pala means to be marvelous, extraordinary, beyond human power to do or to be done, and wonderful. You will remember the Lord appeared to Abraham as three men—a beautiful reference to the thrice holy, holy, holy God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

As we examine this Old Testament theophany—this pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord, we read, They said to him (that’s Abraham), “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “She is in the tent.” The LORD said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?” The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ Is anything too hard (**pala**) for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”

The psalmist here in Psalm 98:1 is saying, “O sing to the Lord a new, refreshed and renewed song, for He has done pala—extraordinary, wonderful, marvelous, beyond human power to explain things. His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.” At that time about 20 years ago, I had just returned from special meetings in Jerome, Idaho. Over 50 people rededicated their lives and 30 people were saved. That was extraordinary. Recently, God brought me back from Horseshoe Bend, where the average attendance was about 14 people for each of the 5 services. Over 20 people rededicated their lives and seven people gave their lives to Jesus. That was marvelous. Pastor Larry coming back to us from such a difficult surgery was pala—beyond human power to explain just how God could help a doctor to devise a way to put in a new section for Pastor Larry in his abdominal aorta. Any time we cannot totally fathom something God has done, it is **pala**. It reminds me of the greatest pala in the world for me. It is my own salvation over 66 years ago. The same year I was born again, G. E. Wright, in 1948, wrote, “Once my soul was astray from the heavenly way. I was wretched and blind as could be. But my Savior in love, gave me peace from above, When He reached down his hand for me. When my Savior reached down for me, Oh when He reached down His hand for me. I was lost and undone, without God or His Son, When my Savior reached down for me.”—Yes, “His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for me. Have you taken the hand of the Lord when He has reached down His hand for you? Secondly,

SING THE GLORY OF THE LORD’S REVELATION, MAKING KNOWN HIS SALVATION AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. (II.)

I read in Psalm 98: 2, “The LORD has made known his salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.” The Hebrew word for revealed in Psalm 98: 2 is **galah** and it means to uncover, to reveal and to unveil. The psalmist was singing because the veil of darkness, and the shadows of the evening were taken away. The Lord had uncovered, revealed and unveiled His salvation, deliverance and righteousness

to the psalmist. What has God unveiled to you? Paul wrote in II Corinthians 3: 16, “When one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.” I recommend to you all a book you can order from Amazon called “Unveiling Grace,” by Lynn K. Wilder. From a rare insider's point of view, “Unveiling Grace” looks at how the prevailing religion of the Intermountain West is “wooing our country” with their religion, lifestyle, and culture. It is a gripping story of how an entire family, deeply enmeshed in this religion and culture, had the scales taken off their eyes, and found their way out. In 1916, a Nazarene pastor, Noah B. Herrell wrote one of the most beautiful hymns about God’s revelation of Himself to us, when He strips away the lies and shows us Himself. That song is entitled, “The Unveiled Christ. “Once our blessed Christ of beauty, was veiled off from human view; But through suffering, death, and sorrow, He has rent the veil in two. O behold the Man of Sorrows! O behold Him in plain view! Lo! He is the mighty Conqueror, since He rent the veil in two; For He is the mighty Conqueror since He rent the veil in two.” Thirdly,

SING THE GLORY OF THE LORD’S STEADFAST LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS TO HOUSEHOLDS THE WORLD OVER, STARTING WITH THE HOUSEHOLD OF ISRAEL. (III.) Psalm 98: 3 states. “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.” As I was having devotions earlier in the week, I read Genesis 28: 10-17. This account is the aftermath of Rebekah, Jacob’s mother instigating him to deceive his father Isaac to steal the blessing of Esau. Neither mother nor son had done right. Their acts of deception were evil and Isaac trembled uncontrollably when he realized he had been deceived. Now Esau wanted to kill Jacob was on his way to Haran to seek a wife, Rebekah’s way to save the life of her son from Esau’s wrath. Jacob is en route to Haran from Beersheba. Listen to what happened as God determined yet to use this man Jacob, whose name meant grabber, cheater, and deceiver. I wept. To think God didn’t hold Jacob’s sin against him and forget His promise and blessing. The text states,

“Meanwhile, Jacob left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran. At sundown he arrived at a good place to set up camp and stopped there for the night. Jacob found a stone to rest his head against and lay down to sleep. As he slept, he dreamed of a stairway that reached from the earth up to heaven. And he saw the angels of God going up and down the stairway. At the top of the stairway stood the LORD, and he said, “I am the LORD, the God of your grandfather Abraham, and the God of your father, Isaac. The ground you are lying on belongs to you. I am giving it to you and your descendants. Your descendants will be as numerous as the dust of the earth! They will spread out in all directions—to the west and the east, to the north and the south. And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you and your descendants. What’s more, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go.

One day I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have finished giving you everything I have promised you. Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I wasn’t even aware of it!” But he was also afraid and said, “What an awesome place this is! It is none other than the house of God, the very gateway to heaven!” Any household where God comes to remember His steadfast love and His righteousness is a holy house, a holy place. Is your house and your household a holy household? It’s a holy place where you should sing to the Lord as I did when I read Psalm 98 and then again Genesis 28. Would you sing with me my favorite song by Lanny Wolfe written in 1977? “Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place, I can feel his mighty power and His grace, I can hear the brush of angel wings, I see glory on each face. Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.” 4thly,

SING THE GLORY OF WORSHIP THAT BURSTS FORTH IN JOY. (IV.)

Notice verses 4-6. “Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises! Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre, with the lyre and the sound of melody! With trumpets and the sound of the horn, make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!” John Wesley once preached to his church, “Sing lustily, and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead. Be no more afraid of your voice now, no more ashamed of its being heard, then when you sung the songs of Satan.” Recently on my way down to Denver to catch the plane, God brought an old old melody to my heart, and I refreshed it, renewing it into my new song to Him. I’ll sing it once and you can sing with me if you know it. If not, sing with me the second time. “Making melody in my heart, Making melody in my heart, Making melody in my heart, Unto the King of kings, Worship and adore Him, Worship and adore Him, Making melody in my heart Unto the King of kings.” Beloved, without apology, it’s fine to sing the glory of worship that bursts forth in joy. Wednesday morning as I was stoking the fire about 4:30 AM, the song came back to me, and I sang it in my soul. I’ve been obeying verse 4 today singing—“Break forth into joy O my soul, Break forth into joy O my soul In the presence of the Lord There is joy forevermore Break forth, break forth Into joy O my soul.” As I finished singing this song out-loud on Wednesday morning, I got a phone call from Illinois. It was a dear man of God in his 80’s, a fellow pastor whom I have highly esteemed for years, LaReau Thorwall. He called to wish Jinny and me a Happy Thanksgiving from him and his wife Wanda. Then he told me, “I pray for you every day—365 days out of every year. Sing it again. 5thly,

SING THE GLORY OF A ROARING SEA THAT COVERS ALL OUR SIN.

(V.) Look at verse 7. “Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world and those who dwell in it!” This week I reconnected with an old pastor friend Angus MacDonald. As we messaged back and forth, he quoted Charles Spurgeon in a quote I have

never heard before. I believe you will enjoy it. “I have learned to kiss the wave that slams me in the Rock of Ages.” It was a new thought that ministered to me, remembering the storms that have sent me crashing into the Lord’s arms. Nevertheless, the overwhelming picture of verse 7 to me is found in the phrase, “and all that fills it.” “Let the sea roar, and all that fills it.” Do you know part of what fills the sea? It’s my sin and it’s your sin that fills the sea. The prophet Micah in Micah 7:19 declared, “God will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities underfoot. You (Lord) will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.” Would you turn to Hymn # 279 and sing verse one and the chorus with me? “What a wondrous message in God’s Word, My sins are blotted out, I know! If I trust in His redeeming blood, My sins are blotted out, I know! My sins are blotted out, I know! My sins are blotted out, I know! They are buried in the depths of the deepest sea: My sins are blotted out I know!” Sixthly,

SING THE GLORY OF GOD’S CREATION AS HIS RIVERS CLAP THEIR HANDS AND HIS HILLS SING FOR JOY TOGETHER. (VI.) Verse 8, 9a

reads, “Let the rivers clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together before the Lord.” How happy can we be in Jesus? Is it only in gathered worship in God’s sanctuary? No, God loves when we are out fishing, hunting, skiing, arrowhead hunting, rock climbing, hiking, and strolling in His creation. He loves when His very creation makes us break into song because we are in love with our Bridegroom. In one of my old 1877 books, “Lectures To My Students” written by Charles Haddon Spurgeon, he spoke of laughter and joy. He said, “It is sort of a tradition of the fathers that it is wrong to laugh on Sundays. The eleventh commandment is, that we are to love one another; and then, according to some people, the twelfth is, “Thou shalt pull a long face on Sunday.” I must confess that I would rather hear people laugh than I would see them asleep in the house of God.” Dr. Theodore Cuyler and Charles Spurgeon were once out in the fields enjoying God’s sunshine and the beauties of nature. Dr. Cuyler told a story at which Charles Spurgeon laughed until his sides shook. Suddenly Charles Spurgeon said, ‘Theodore, let’s get down on our knees and thank God for laughter.’ And these two happy Christian preachers knelt in the field right there and thanked God for His great gift of laughter.” Here the psalmist say the rivers clap their hands and the hills sing for joy. Would you turn with me to “How Great Thou Art!” --# 16, verse 2 and sing it with me? “When thru’ the woods and forest glades I wander...And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees, When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur...And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze, Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art! Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee; How great Thou art, how great Thou art.” Seventhly,

SING THE GLORY OF JESUS' SOON RETURN TO TAKE US HOME.

(VII.) This is the last verse of Psalm 98—v. 9—“For He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.” In pre-marital counseling, I have heard couples express a sweet and precious desire when I have asked them what I could pray for as the wedding arrives. These couples I am referring to are those who have waited to share intimacy until after they are married. More than once I have had good and godly couples say, “Pastor, pray for the Lord to wait to return again until after our marriage and honeymoon.” And I have prayed this with them. It is a precious request. Isn't that a lot of pressure, for marriage to be so great that a loving couple would like to postpone Christ's return for them to be married first? Beloved, great as marriage is, at its best—earthly marriage of a husband and a wife cannot hold a candle to marriage to Jesus, and having our Bridegroom come to take us Home for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. I want to close out this message with the first verse of a beautiful Gospel song written by May Taylor Roberts back in 1925, “A Meeting In The Air.”

“You have heard of little Moses in the bull-rush. You have heard of fearless David and his sling. You have heard the stirring tales of dreaming Joseph, And of Jonah and the whale you often sing. There are many, many heroes in the Bible, I would like to meet them all, I do declare. By and by the Lord will surely let us meet them At that meeting in the air. There is going to be a meeting in the air. In the sweet, sweet, bye and bye. I'm going to meet you, meet you there, in that home beyond the sky. Such singing you will hear, never heard by mortal ear, t'will be glorious I do declare. And God's own son will be the leading One. At that meeting in the air.” Beloved, when the Rapture comes, and it will soon, what joy it will be for it will be a honeymoon as the Bride with our Bridegroom that will last forever, righteousness will prevail forever, justice and peace will forever hold sway and sadness and sorrow will flee away. The delights of the people of God when this day comes soon will be past telling. Keep the Thanksgiving spirit in your hearts. Keep singing a new song to the Lord. “Worship and adore Him, worship and adore Him. Making melody in our hearts unto the King of kings.” Amen.