

PSALMS 92 TO 97 AND 98 AND 99

PSALM 95

1. We should sing and be thankful to God—i.e., according to verses 1 and 2. Give at least two reasons for doing so according to verses 3-5.
2. Show how the solemn warning of this psalm was appropriate when written and also today.

PSALM 96

1. What are the *new* thoughts introduced by this psalm?
2. This is called "a missionary song". Why?
3. The material reign of Christ on earth in Jerusalem in a restored Temple seems to be the suggestion of the comments on this psalm. Discuss.

PSALM 97

1. Someone seems to think America and Europeans should take a particular interest in this psalm. Why?
2. Read and interpret Isa. 24:15; 41:1; 42:4; 49:1; 59:18. Discuss.
3. Rotherham has a marvelous ability of seeing a literal earthly fulfillment of vs. 4-11. Discuss.

PSALMS 98 and 99

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

A Shorter Service of Song (for a Sabbath Day).

ANALYSIS

Psalm 98: An Invitation to Sing the New Song of Jehovah's Victory in behalf of the House of Israel.

Psalm 99: Jehovah's Assumption of Kingship Proclaimed: with a Renewed Call to Worship.

PSALM 98

(Lm.) Psalm.

- 1 Sing ye to Jehovah a song that is new,
for wondrous things hath he done,—

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his own right hand and his holy arm have gotten him
victory!¹

- 2 Jehovah hath made known his victory,
to the eyes of the nations hath he unveiled his righteousness:
- 3 He hath remembered his kindness and his faithfulness to the
house of Israel,
all the ends of the earth have seen the victory¹ of our God.
- 4 Shout ye to Jehovah all the earth,
break forth and ring out your joy and make ye melody:
- 5 Make ye melody to Jehovah with the lyre,—
with the lyre and the voice of psalmody;
- 6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn
shout ye before the King—Jehovah!
- 7 Let the sea thunder and the fulness thereof,
the world and they who dwell therein:
- 8 The streams—let them clap their hands,
together the mountains—let them ring out their joy:—
- 9 Before Jehovah for he is coming to judge the earth:
he will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.

(Nm.)

PSALM 99

(Nm.)

- 1 *Jehovah hath become king*²—let the peoples tremble,
enthroned on cherubim—let the earth quiver.
- 2 Jehovah in Zion is great,
and high is he above all the peoples.
- 3 Let them thank thy name great and fearful:
- (4) "*Holy is he.*—4 and strong,
a king who loveth justice."
Thou hast established equity,
justice and righteousness in Jacob hast thou thyself wrought.
- 5 *Exalt ye Jehovah our God,*
and bow down at his footstool:
"Holy³ is he!

1. Or: "salvation."

2. As in 93:1, 96:10, 97:1.

3. Some cod. (w. Sep., Vul.): "For holy"—Gn.

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- 6 Moses and Aaron among his priests,
and Samuel among the callers on his name,—
callers [were they] unto Jehovah and he used to answer
them;
- 7 In a pillar of cloud used he to speak unto them:
they kept his testimonies,
and a statute he gave to them.
- 8 Jehovah our God! thou thyself didst answer them,
a forgiving GOD becamest thou unto them;
but one taking vengeance on the evil deeds of them.
- 9 *Exalt ye Jehovah our God,
and bow down at his holy mountain;
For holy is Jehovah our God.*

(Nm.)

PARAPHRASE

PSALM 98

Sing a new song to the Lord telling about His mighty deeds!
For He has won a mighty victory by His power and holiness.

2, 3 He has announced this victory and revealed it to every
nation by fulfilling His promise to be kind to Israel. The whole
earth has seen God's salvation of His people.

4 That is why the earth breaks out in praise to God, and
sings for utter joy!

5 Sing your praise accompanied by music from the harp.

6 Let the cornets and trumpets shout! Make a joyful
symphony before the Lord, the King!

7 Let the sea in all its vastness roar with praise! Let the
earth and all those living on it shout, "Glory to the Lord."

8, 9 Let the waves clap their hands in glee, and the hills
sing out their songs of joy before the Lord, for He is coming to
judge the world with perfect justice.

PSALM 99

Jehovah is King! Let the nations tremble! He is enthroned
upon the cherubim. Let the whole earth shake.

2 Jehovah sits in majesty in Zion, supreme above all rulers
of the earth.

3 Let them reverence Your great and holy name.

4 This mighty King is determined to give justice. Fairness
is the touchstone of everything He does. He gives justice
throughout Israel.

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5 Exalt the Lord our holy God! Bow low before His feet.

6 When Moses and Aaron and Samuel, His prophet, cried to Him for help, He answered them.

7 He spoke to them from the pillar of cloud and they followed his instructions.

8 O Jehovah our God! You answered them and forgave their sins, yet punished them when they went wrong.

9 Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at His holy mountain in Jerusalem, for He is holy.

EXPOSITION

The warrant for regarding Pss. 98 and 99 as a Shorter Service of Song for Sabbath Worship is informal, but probably sufficient. The comparative brevity of this "Service" is obvious. Its distinctness from what has gone before is marked by the superscribed word *Psalm* over 98. Its substantial identity of theme with Pss. 92-97 is easily perceived; and chiefly appears in the recurrence of the Proclamation of Jehovah's Kingship, sustained by similar invitations to worship, and a repetition, in 98:9, of the herald note of 96:13.

Ps. 98 opens like 96, only with a clearer statement of the precise nature of Jehovah's *victory*: that it amounts to an *unveiling* of his *righteousness*, by fulfilling his promises to *the house of Israel*.

Ps. 99 contains a considerable amount of new matter: as, for example, Jehovah's occupancy of his *cherubic throne*; Zion being the especial place where his *greatness* is displayed; with a tolerable clear reminder of the "trisagion" or "thrice holy" cry of the Seraphim in Isa. 6. Again, it is very pointedly said that Jehovah *himself* has wrought *justice and righteousness in Jacob*—the use of which name, for "Israel," offers a further assurance that it is to the historic nation of the Twelve Tribes that the psalm refers. It is perhaps a little difficult to determine the motive for referring by name to *Moses, Aaron and Samuel*: probably not so much to generalise, by intimating that even now they have among them *a Moses, an Aaron, and a Samuel* to intercede for them (as Kp. suggests) as to connect, in a more general way the old history with the new, and to enjoin the lesson of holy fear as not out of place in the coming glorious time.

The foregoing rapid survey of the two Sabbath Services of

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Song has been submitted for the purpose of preparing the reader for the following.

GENERAL REFLECTIONS

on the entire twofold series of psalms whose Keynote is *Jehovah hath become King*.

The *first* reflection is: That here we have intimated some NEW DIVINE ACTION based upon the abiding and unalterable Sovereignty of God, but in advance of it; coming into effect at a special time and place and under special circumstances; and furthermore leading to results so stupendous as naturally to raise the question how far they have even yet been fulfilled. It is satisfactory to observe with what practical unanimity Expositors agree that such "New Divine Action" is affirmed by the great words of proclamation four times over used in these psalms: *Yahweh malak* = *Jehovah hath become King*. Thus the "Speakers' Commentary" says: "The verb rendered 'is (now) king' is here used in reference to the inauguration of the Theocracy in its final and complete manifestation." Similarly Perowne: "IS KING. More exactly, 'hath become King,' as if by a solemn coronation (comp. the same expression of a new monarch ascending the throne, 2 Sam. 15:10, 1 Kings 1:11, 2 Kings, 9:13). He has been King from everlasting, but now His kingdom is visibly set up, His power and His majesty fully displayed and acknowledged." More fully Delitzsch: "Heretofore Jahve's rule, seeing He has waived the use of His omnipotence, has been self-abasement and self-renunciation; now, however, He manifests Himself in all His majesty, which soars above everything; He has put this on as a garment; He is King and now shows himself to the world in His royal robe." In like manner Thrupp: "There is in the words themselves, as Hengstenberg just remarks, an allusion to the form used at the proclamation of the commencement of the reign of an earthly sovereign; and hence it follows that the language does not apply to the constant government of God, but to a new glorious manifestation of his dominion." With equal explicitness, Briggs: "Not the assertion of his everlasting royal prerogative, but the joyous celebration of the fact that He has now shown Himself to be King by a royal advent, taking His place on His throne to govern the world Himself, and no longer through inefficient or wicked servants." (Cp. Intro., Chap. III., "Kingdom.")

The *second* reflection is: That these psalms are JEHOVISTIC

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RATHER THAN MESSIANIC, as a glance through them will at once shew. No Messiah, no Son of David, is once named in them. At first this is startling: ultimately it seems less strange. For, let us consider: Since "No man can see God and live" (Exo. 33:20), since "No man hath seen God himself at any time" (John 1:18), it follows that whenever men have been held to have seen him, it can only have been through a veil. It is well known that there are incidents and suggestions even in the Old Testament looking in this direction, particularly with regard to the Messenger in whom is the name Jehovah (Gen. 16:10-13, 19:24, Exo. 23:20, 21, 33:14, 15). Then, too, Christians, holding Jesus of Nazareth to have been the Messiah, consistently conceive of him as the veiled manifestation of Deity—veiled "in self-renunciation and self-abasement"; and therefore no man was compelled to see his glory; which glory, now, for the present, is "hid in God" (Col. 3:3) and ready at any time to burst forth *as in these Theocratic psalms*.

A *third* reflection naturally follows: That these psalms, for their fulfilment, await THE MESSIAH'S SECOND ADVENT. The psalms are highly poetic, and even dramatic, as all sober interpreters admit. Still, it by no means follows that they have no clear burden to deliver; and therefore the dictate of sanctified common sense would appear to be to say, Will the burden of these psalms, when due allowance has been made for figures of speech, be well met when the Messiah returns, according to the plain sense of his own and his apostles' sayings about his Second Coming?

We may here strengthen these reflections by quoting the weighty words of Delitzsch: "In addition to such psalms as behold in anticipation the Messianic future, whether it be prophetically or only typically, or typically and prophetically at once, as the world-overcoming and world-blessing kingship of the Anointed of Jahve, there are others, in which the perfected theocracy as such is seen beforehand, not as the parousia of a human king, but as the parousia of Jahve himself, as the kingdom of God manifest in all its glory. These theocratic psalms form along with the Christocratic two series of prophecies, referring to the last time, which run parallel with one another. The one has for its goal the Anointed of Jahve, who from out of Zion rules over all peoples; while the other has Jahve, seated above the cherubim, to whom the whole world pays homage. Although these two series converge in the Old Testament, they

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do not come together; it is the historical fulfilment that first of all makes it clear that the parousia of the Anointed One and the parousia of Jahve are one and the same. It is only at a few climaxes of prophecy that this thought flashes forth in the Old Testament"—Intro. to Ps. 98.

A *fourth* reflection is: That as soon as the ultimate blending of the Theocratic and the Christocratic prophecies is accepted, and information is accordingly sought in the New Testament regarding the Messiah's Second Coming as destined to fulfil these psalms, particularly as to the Destruction of the Lawless One by that Second Coming, according to 2 Thes. 2,—so soon is THE POSITION OF PSALM 94 IN THIS SABBATH SERVICE OF SONG TRIUMPHANTLY VINDICATED. It cannot be denied that its position here is extraordinary; nor can it be doubted that the psalm itself—both in its description of so gigantic a development of *Lawlessness*, as is portrayed therein, and in its outcries for *Divine Vengeance* there-upon—readily carries us beyond Hezekiah and beyond Sennacherib. It would surpass the wit of man to coin a more apt phrase for describing the COMING LAWLESS ONE, in the awful doings to be permitted him, than as *the Throne of Engulfing Ruin framing Mischief by Statute*. Given, then, the conclusions that this Throne of Iniquity will yet prove specially disastrous to Hezekiah's nation; and that Jehovah's overthrow of that Throne will constitute the great *Victory* by which the Theocracy will be visibly set up on earth, and Jehovah's final reign inaugurated,—then nothing could be more appropriate than the insertion of this psalm just here in Hezekiah's larger Sabbath-day's Service of Song. Indeed, only to see this, is nothing short of discovering a new, unexpected and most welcome proof of Jehovah's wondrous overruling ways; and it may be forgiven any Christian if, under such an impulse, with bowed head he here sends up to heaven his welcome to YAHWEH-CHRIST as EARTH'S COMING KING.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are the reasons for considering psalms 98 & 99 as a shorter service of song for a sabbath day?
2. What is the purpose of referring to Moses, Aaron, and Samuel by name?
3. Rotherham makes *four reflections* on these two psalms—shall we state and discuss the thought of each: (a) On the basic pre-supposition that *Jehovah hath become king*,

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What is the "new divine action"? Evidently the rule or kingship of God has taken on a new aspect. (b) What is meant by saying "these psalms are Jehovistic rather than Messianic"? What is the ultimate conclusion? (c) The fulfillment of these psalms await the return of the Messiah. Are we to believe there is to be a literal rule of God through Christ in Jerusalem? Discuss. (d) Psalms 94 is vindicated—how? What does II Thess. 2 say about this? Is the "lawless one described in Psalm 99? Discuss.

PSALM 100

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Invitation to All the Earth to Come In before
Jehovah and Worship.

ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-3, Invitation to Worship, based on Jehovah's Claims as Creator and Shepherd. Stanza II., vers. 4, 5, Renewed Invitation, based on Jehovah's Own Perfections.

(Lm.) Psalm—For a Thank-offering (or For Thanksgiving.)

- 1 Shout ye unto Jehovah all the earth!
- 2 serve Jehovah with gladness,
come in before him with a ringing cry.
- 3 Know that Jehovah he is God,
he made us and his are we,¹—
his people and the flock of his shepherding.²
- 4 Come into his gates with thanksgiving,³
into his courts with praise,⁴—
give thanks to him, bless his name;
- 5 For good is Jehovah
to the ages his kindness,—
and unto generation after generation his faithfulness.

(Nm.)

1. So Heb. marg. (*kri=read* preferred by Del., Per., Kp., Br., Dr.).
Heb. text (M.T.): "and not we ourselves."

2. Cp. 79:13, 95:7, (Isa. 63:11).

3. Or: "a thank-offering."

4. Or: "a song of praise."