

“Joy to the World!”

Psalm 98:1-9; Luke 2:8-14

Rev. Nollie Malabuyo • December 24, 2017

98 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.

²The Lord has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

³He 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.

⁴Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

⁵Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody!

⁶With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the Lord!

⁷Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who dwell in it!

⁸Let the rivers clap their hands;
let the hills sing for joy together

⁹before the Lord, for he comes
to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.

8 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,
¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”^[a]

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Beloved Congregation of Christ: “Merry Christmas!” “Happy Holidays!” “Are you ready for Christmas?” Iyan ang mga karaniwang bati na ating nadidinig tuwing kapaskuhan. Isa ito sa pinaka-importanteng araw sa ating mga Filipino. Lahat ay nag hahanda sa isang mahabang bakasyon, Sa mga nasa malalayog lugar , kakaiba ang pakiramdam na kayo ay uuwi sa inyong mga tahanan at makapiling ang mga mahal sa buhay. Lahat din tayo marahil ay nananabik makinig ng mga awiting pamasko at ito ay ating ding palagiang inaawit.

Speaking of Christmas carols, did you know that the hymn “Joy to the World!” **is a loose paraphrase of Psalm 98?** Pansinin natin na Ito ay binigyan pa ng additional na pag lalapat ng letra ng composer kaya ito ay matatagpuang kasama ng ibang mga hymno sa “Hymn section” ng ating psalter hymnal at wala ito a Psalter Section.

Ang hymn na ito ay unang nalathala ni ISAAC WATTS sa kanyang aklat na “psalms of David” nuong 1719, ito ay naglalaman ng mga awitin hango sa aklat ng mga Awit. Ipinanganak si Isaac Watts sa Southampton, England nuong 1674. Sa batang edad na 16 , sya ay nag aral sa Academy of Thomas Rowe, isang ministro sa London, at sa edad na 24, sya ay naging minister at nakasulat ng humigit kumulang 750 hymns at ilan dito ay ang kilala nating “When I Survey the wondrous Cross” at “Our God , Our Help in Ages Past”. And he is recognised as the “Godfather of English Hymnody”.

Watts paraphrased many of the Psalms because he was not satisfied with the existing metrical Psalms and their tunes. In those days, only Psalms were sung in the churches. So he wrote his own Psalms of David in metrical form.

Watts interpreted the Book of Psalms in a Christ-centered manner. This is consistent with the Protestant Reformers’ doctrine that **all of the Bible points to Christ**. Kaya kung mapapansin natin ang apat na Stanzas ng “Joy to the World” , lahat ito ay naka sentro sa Panginoong Hesus.

Ang Psalm 98 ay madaling nahahati sa tatlong bahagi na may tig-tatlong talata. Na sya ding ating magiging Sermon points ngayong umaga.

Una- Verse 1-3 Ay ang pagtawag sa Israel upang umawit ng maligayang pagpupuri sa Diyos.

Ikalawa- Verse 4-6 Na ang lahat ng mga bansa ay maki-isa sa maligayang pag-awit.

Ikatlo- Verse 7-9 Maging ang Kalikasan ay maki-isa sa pagpupuri sa Diyos.

Joy to Israel (verses 1-3)

Psalm 98 begins with a call for Israel to “sing to the LORD a new song” because “he has done marvellous things!” In the Old Testament, God’s “marvellous works” usually refer to his **wonderful, merciful works** in saving Israel from their slavery in Egypt for 400 years. So Psalm 98:1 continues, “**His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.**” These are the same words that Moses used in his song after Israel escaped from Egypt, in Exodus 15:6, that says, “**Your right hand, O LORD, glorious in power, your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.**” Pansinin din po natin na ito din ang parehong salita sa awit ni Maria matapos ipahayag ng angel na sya ay magkaka-anak sa pamamagitan ng Banal na Espiritu. Luke 1:51 says “[God] **has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts**”

When God fought for Israel in their exodus out of Egypt and in the conquest of Canaan, all the surrounding nations saw God’s might. **The woman Rahab** told the spies that the people of Jericho heard how God defeated the Amorites, so they feared Israel. **The Gibeonites** also dreaded Israel’s victories over the Canaanites, so they tricked Israel into a peace treaty. So the psalmist sings, “The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.”

Tayo din po ay may inaawit na bagong awitin... when we remember how God saved us from our slavery to sin in the past. We were children of wrath, now we are children of mercy. We were in darkness, now we are in the Light of Christ. We used to sing songs of the world, now we have new songs to sing: psalms and hymns, and Christmas carols that come from God’s Word. These are “new songs” not because they are new compositions. Rather, they are songs about the “new mercies” of God in saving us from sin through Christ, **an event the Old Testament believers longed for**. That’s why Paul commands us, “put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life . . . and . . . put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:22-24).

Anu po bang awiting pamasko ang gustong gusto ninyong awitin before you came to Christ? Sigurado inaawit ninyo ang “Jingle bells” or yung “Twelve Days of Christmas”? Subalit ngayon mga kapatid, mayroon tayong mga bagong awitin gaya ng “O Come, O Come, Immanuel,” “Angels We Have Heard on High,” and of-course ang “Joy to the World” na ating inawit kani-Kanina lamang.

Mga bagong awitin hindi dahil mga bagong komposisyon ito , Sa halip ito ay mga bagong awitin patungkol sa pagdating ng kahabagan ng Diyos, sa pagkakaligtas nya sa atin sa kasalanan sa pamamagitan ni Kristo. Kaya po inaawit natin ang mga Christmas Hymns na ito dahil inaalala natin ang kanyang dakilang Pagibig at katapatan dahil sa mga gawa ni Kristo sa krus ng Kalbaryo.

Joy to the Nations (verses 4-6)

Sa ikalawang bahagi po ng ating sermon ating itatanung.. Bakit natin kinakanta ang “Joy to the World” eh karamihan naman sa mundo ay hindi sangayon kay Kristo at sa Iglesia? Why would the nations whom Israel defeated sing praise to the Lord? **Its Because in verses 4-6**, the psalmist looks forward to the day when the whole world will praise God, **“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!”**

Nuong unang panahon, kapag ang isang hari ay nagtagumpay sa labanan, dumadating syang sumisigaw dahil sa tagumpay kasama ang pagpupugay ng kaniyang kawan at mga mamamayan. Makikita po natin sa Awit 66: 1 and sabi.. “Magkaingay kayong may kagalakan sa Diyos, buong lupa” at sa talatang 3 , ibinigay ang dahilan kung bakit dapat na magsaya ang lahat, “ Dahil sa kadakilaan ng inyong kapangyarihan, ang inyong kaaway ay pakunwaring susunod sa iyo”.

All the earth must shout for joy because Christ has defeated all of God’s enemies. This final and complete victory of Christ has never happened in human history, so what is the psalmist singing about?

When the child Jesus was presented in the temple, there was a man named Simeon, who had been waiting for the “Consolation of Israel.” When he saw the child, the Holy Spirit **revealed to him that that child was the one he had been waiting for all his life**. So he said, *“my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles.”* He was prophesying that Jesus would save many from all nations. The gospel of Christ will keep expanding into all the world **until all the elect are saved, and then he will return (Matt 24:14)**.

Therefore, when the psalmist calls for all the earth to sing for joy, he is singing about the Second Coming of Christ. In his First Advent 2,000 years ago, Jesus came as a humble baby in a manger and a Suffering Servant crucified on the cross. He now rules over his people, but not yet over all the world. But when he returns from heaven, **he will be a wrathful Conquering King of Kings who would trample upon all the rebellious kings of the earth who defy his rule (Rev 19:15)**.

And how will God’s people praise the LORD? They will make music with their voices and instruments. When Israel worshiped in the temple, they used only four instruments – cymbals, harps, lyres, trumpets – not any instrument to the liking of people. This is in obedience to God’s commandments in 2 Chronicles 29:25-26.

Joy to the Earth

Lastly Brothers & Sisters, the psalmist doesn't call only Israel and the whole world to sing joyful songs to God. **He even calls all nature to do the same.**

In Stanza 1 of "Joy to the World!" Isaac Watts writes, **"And heav'n and nature sing."** And in stanza two, **he elaborates that even further "fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains" sing with joy at the coming of the LORD.** This is a **paraphrase of Psalm 98:7-8, "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."** The psalmist uses what we call in Theology a "literary device" called **"personification"** to dramatize that the whole creation also praises God for his wonderful works of salvation. Katotohanan nga po na ang mga Gawa ng Diyos ay kamangha-mangha na kahit ang dagat, ang mga ilog at mga burol ay aawit ng papuri sa Diyos.

The totality of the rejoicing of all life in earth and sea because of the complete restoration of creation is also anticipated by Paul. In Romans 8:19-23, he says that at present, the whole creation - man and beast and nature – is "groaning" under the weight of sin. But when Christ returns, "creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption . . . and . . . we wait eagerly for . . . the redemption of our bodies."

But our **restoration to perfection** is only one aspect of his Second Coming. **The other aspect serves as a warning to unbelievers and rebels against God.** The whole creation will rejoice at his coming because he will complete our salvation. **But we will also rejoice because he "comes to judge the earth.** He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity." Ang dawalang pangyayari pong ito ay magaganap all at once. Gaya ng sinabi sa "Apostles' Creed" at sa "Nicene Creed" reflects verse 9 when we affirm, **"from [heaven], he will judge the living and the dead."... It is indeed a hymn for both His first & second coming.**

And that is why using Verse 8 as a proof-text to encourage people to clap during worship services in praise of God is wrong. Who are clapping? **The rivers, not the people!** And why are they clapping? **Because the LORD is coming to judge the earth!** The most common reason for clapping is to rejoice at the judgment or destruction of someone. For example, we read in Nahum 3:19, "All who hear the news about you [Nineveh] clap their hands over you" (see also Job 27:23; 34:37; Psa 47:1, 2; Lam 2:15; Ezk 6:11; 25:6). Isaiah 55:12-13 **also says that mountains, hills and trees will clap.** Why will they clap? **Because God has redeemed his people and restored the whole creation.**

Dear Friends: The prophecy of Psalm 98 that all the world and all creation will sing joyful praises to God started being fulfilled when Jesus was born 2,000 years ago **in his First Advent.** The gospel of Christ has reached all the nations of the world, and continues to save God's people.

May apat na stanzas po ang “Joy to the World” at isa sa mga lines nito ay **“No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground. He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found.”** While this is not found in Psalm 98, Isaac Watts refers **to the fall of Adam into sin** in the Garden of Eden. God placed a curse of sin and death on all mankind and all nature that only the Seed of the woman, Adam’s wife, could break (Gen 3:14-19). **Jesus the child born in Bethlehem was that Seed who would banish the curse and bring blessings to all who would believe in him (Rom 16:20; Gal 4:4-6; Heb 2:14).**

In the Second Carol we sung today, we express our joy, praise and gratitude to God who has saved us from our slavery to sin, and who will complete our salvation in his Second Advent. All these songs are **“new songs”** for us who believe, because God has shown his **“new mercies”** in Christ our Savior.

Therefore, we look forward to the **“Joy to the World”** in the heavenly assembly in Revelation 5:9, “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.’” -AMEN

CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome Remarks

** Please stand if you are able.*

GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP

Opening Words:

Minister or Elder: Welcome to to the Festival of Lessons & Carols of _____
Covenant Reformed Church.

Through readings from God's Holy Word, we will recount the dramatic history of salvation. We will survey the whole panorama of redemptive history from the Garden of Eden in Genesis 1, through the promises to the Patriarchs and to the Prophets, and to their climactic fulfillment in the Gospels: the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. Finally, we look forward to the return of the God-Man to this earth in Revelation 22.

Patterned after Scriptures' a covenantal dialogue between God and his people, God speaks in the Scripture read and briefly explained; then the people respond in songs of praise.

This service is modeled after the Anglican "Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols" first drawn up for a Christmas Eve service in 1880. This "festival" was later modified in 1918 for King's College in Cambridge, England. Since then, this service has been adapted for use in Christian churches all over the world.

We hope this service causes you to reflect with wonder and awe upon the great significance of the incarnation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to trust in Him alone for salvation, and to look forward with hope to His second coming.

As a courtesy to your neighbors and in reverence for God, please silence mobile devices, minimize getting up, and take overly loud children out of the sanctuary until they calm down.

Call to Worship ~ *Psalm 98:1-4 & Gal. 4:4-5*

** Prayer of Invocation (based on Luke 1:68-79)*

Blessed be you, Our Father, the Lord God of Israel, for you have visited and redeemed your people and have raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of your servant David, as you spoke by the mouth of your holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show mercy promised to our fathers and to remember your holy covenant, the oath that you swore to our father Abraham, to grant to us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve you without fear, in holiness and righteousness before you all our days.

And so, we come to you now to worship you in the name of Jesus. We celebrate the victory of your Son who has overcome death and saved us from the power of sin! We remember his humble incarnation and we rejoice in his glorious exaltation! Our Great High Priest has gone before, has entered into the Holy of Holies, and opened up a way

for us to follow. In his name we, too, would enter into your eternal presence, for he is our priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. To him be all praise, together with you, O Father, and the Holy Spirit. One Lord, the same in every age. Amen.

Oh sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvellous 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

GALATIANS 4:4-5

⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons

Invocation

We lift up our eyes to the hills.
From where does our help come?
Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

God is greeting us through the book of Revelation 1: 4-6

⁴ John to the seven churches that are in Asia (And here at ZCRC Imus)

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen

SONG OF CONSECRATION

Let us sing stanza 4 only of “Angels, From the Realms of Glory” #340

BENEDICTION & CHARGE

Ephesians 3: 20-21

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

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