

## **"Marvelous Things" A Summary of Chapter 3 "The Fullness of Joy" by Charles Spurgeon** **An Exposition of Psalm 98:1-2**

**Psa 98:1** A Psalm. 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.

**Psa 98:2** The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

The invitations of the Gospel are invitations to happiness. In delivering God's message, we do not ask men to come to a funeral, but to a wedding feast. In fact you might condense the Gospel message into this joyous invitation: "Oh come and learn how to sing unto the Lord a new song!"

**THE GOSPEL OUR SOURCE OF JOY:** As long as the Gospel is preached in this world its main message will be one of joy. The Gospel is a source of joy unto those who proclaim it, for unto us, "who are less than the least of all the saints, is this grace given that we should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph 3:8). The Gospel also is a source of joy to all who really hear it and accept it, for its very name means "glad tidings of good things." Our attention will be called this morning to the "marvellous things" mentioned in the text before us. If you read the text carefully you will notice that there are <sup>1</sup>some marvellous things which are simply amazing in themselves: he has done marvelous things! You will also see secondly that there are <sup>2</sup>some that are wonderful in the way in which they were done: His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. And then thirdly you will see that there are <sup>3</sup>some that are marvellous in the way in which they were made known: The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

**1. SIMPLY MARVELOUS THINGS:** Let us then consider those things which are marvelous in and of themselves: for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

**a) Christ overcame sin:** What foes has Christ overcome? Our main foe, our sin, both as to the guilt of it and as to the power of it. As to the guilt of it, there was the law, which we have broken and which must be satisfied. Christ has kept the positive precepts of that law in His own perfect life, and He has vindicated the honor of that law by His sacrificial death on the cross. Therefore the law being satisfied the strength of sin is gone. This means that even in God's great Book of Remembrance there is no record of sin against any believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. "By Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:39). This means all of your sins as a believer, as many as they have been, have been drowned in the red sea of Christ's blood. Thus He gained a complete victory over all the guilt of sin. ***We do believe beloved, that our sin has received its deathblow. It still lingers within us, for its death is by crucifixion, and crucifixion is a lingering death. Its heart is not altogether fastened to the cross, but its hands are, so that we cannot sin as we once did. Its feet, too, are fastened, so that we cannot run in the way of transgressors as we once did. And one of these days the spear will pierce its heart, and it will utterly die. Then, with the faultless ones before the throne of God, we will be unattended by depravity or corruption any longer.***

**b) Christ conquered death:** In connection with sin came death, for death is the daughter of sin, and follows closely upon sin. Jesus has conquered death. It is not possible for believers to die eternally, for Jesus said: "Because I live, you shall live also" (John 14:19). Even the character of the natural death is changed for the believer. It is not now a penal infliction, but a necessary way of elevating our nature from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor 15:50). Even those who will still be living at the coming of the Lord must be bodily changed in order that they may be fit to enter glory. ***Death therefore to believers is but a putting off of our weekday garments so that we may put on our Sunday best, the laying aside of the travel-stained clothes of earth so that we may put on the pure garments of joy forever.***

**c) Christ defeated Satan:** Just as Christ conquered sin and death, so has He conquered the Devil and all his hosts of fallen spirits. This monster of iniquity, this monster of craft and malice, has striven to hold us in perpetual bondage. However, Christ met him in the wilderness and vanquished him there. Therefore this is the joyous news we have to bring to sinners: sin and death and the Devil have all been vanquished by the Great Captain of our Soul.

**2. THE MARVELOUS WAYS OF THE LORD:** According to our text, what the Lord did is not only marvelous in itself, but the way in which He did it was also amazing. You see, no one was associated with the Lord Jesus Christ in the conquest that He achieved over sin and death and the Devil, and

nothing is more abhorrent to a believing soul than the idea of giving any bit of glory to anyone but the Lord Jesus Christ.

**a) The wisdom of His ways:** Another wonder is that He did it all so wisely: “His right hand...have worked salvation for Him.” When Christ fought our battle with His right hand, He did it with ease, with strength and with infinite wisdom. The design of salvation is the very perfection of wisdom, because all the attributes of God are equally glorified in it. There is as much justice as there is mercy in a sinner’s salvation by the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Salvation reveals God’s complete mercy as well as His total justice: **God fulfilled His threatening against sin by smiting His own Son and gave the love of His heart full expression in saving even the chief of sinners through the death of His dear Son. The more I consider the doctrine of substitution, the more my soul is enamoured with the matchless wisdom of God that devised this system of salvation.** In suffering, bleeding and dying, Jesus Christ has gotten us the victory.

**b) The Holiness of His ways:** But holiness was also involved: “His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.” The psalmist seemed, as he progressed in his worship, to fall more and more in love with the matchless holiness of God. Since the creation of this world, there was never an act of mercy performed by God that was not in perfect harmony with the severest justice. God, although He has loved and saved unholy men, has never stained His holy hands in the act of saving them. He remains the “holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty” (Rev 4:8), although He is still very full of pity and compassion as He passes by transgression, iniquity, and sin, and presses prodigal children to His heart.

**3. THE LORD’S MARVELOUS GRACE:** For us today it is pretty much a familiar thing to hear the Gospel; but I want you just to carry your mind back to the setting of Psalm 98. What was then known about salvation was almost exclusively known by the Jews. Here and there a proselyte was led into the bonds of the covenant, but for the most part the whole world lay in heathen darkness. Gentile sinners knew nothing whatsoever concerning the truth of God. And it might have remained that way if the Lord had not **made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.** Our present privileges are greater than the privileges of Ancient Israel, of those, whom I am afraid we sometimes despise. They were the favoured people of God. Through their unbelief they have been set aside for a while, but Israel is yet to be restored to even greater blessings than it formerly experienced.

**a) The Holy Spirit’s Wonderful intervention:** Let us not forget that in order to accomplish this great work of salvation, it was necessary that the blessed Son of God descend to this world. It was also necessary that the Spirit of God be given to rest upon the Church, to be the inspiration by which the Gospel should be preached among the heathen. The incarnation of the Son of God is no greater mystery than the indwelling of the Spirit of God in the hearts of men. It is truly marvelous that the Holy Spirit, who is equally God with the Father and the Son, should come and reside in these bodies of ours and make them His temple. **Yet, remember that if this had not been so, there would have been no effective preaching of the Gospel. Further, unless the Holy Spirit blesses the Word right now, there will be no open showing of Christ’s righteousness to you and no making known His salvation to your heart.** Also realize that in connection with the work of the Holy Spirit, there has had to be an unbroken chain of divine providence to bring the Gospel to you and to your land.

**b) A Greater revelation of Grace:** Further and finally then, let us more sweetly praise the Lord that we not only live where the Gospel is made known, but that God has made it known to some of us in a still deeper sense. Some of us now understand like we never did before, the righteousness of God – His ways of making a man righteous through Jesus Christ. This is another work of the Holy Spirit, for which we have good reason to “sing unto the Lord a new song.” **Sinner, God has sent the Gospel to you to tell you that His Son Jesus Christ has conquered sin and death and the Devil, and that, if you believe in Jesus you will be a partaker in His victory. There is nothing for you to do but to believe in Him. Even the power to understand His truth is God’s gift to you; even the faith that receives His truth He works in you according to His Spirit.** You are to be nothing so that God may be everything. It is for you to fall at His feet with confusion of face and contrition of heart. Then when He bids you to do so, you need to rise up and say, “I will sing a new song unto the Lord. “O Lord, I will praise Thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me” (Isa 12:1) through Him who won the victory on my behalf.